

ROBERT J. BURDETTE
• HIS • MESSAGE •

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Robert J. Burdette

ROBERT J. BURDETTE

HIS MESSAGE

EDITED FROM HIS WRITINGS
BY HIS WIFE
CLARA B. BURDETTE



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THE CLARA VISTA PRESS
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

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FOREWORD

This biography was undertaken at the request of many friends of Mr. Burdette, and because I believe what James Whitcomb Riley wrote to me: "Robert, your husband and my friend, a man with a divine gift, deserves this presentation of a lasting memorial, which he so courageously built up by his own life."

To present truly a character dowered with a genius so out of the ordinary that the Creator never bestowed upon another an identical gift, I am persuaded that the only way is to collate the expressions he himself gave to it. Therefore, I have endeavored to set forth the life of my late husband, Robert J. Burdette, by these excerpts from his writings.

If this book shall recall to friends beautiful memories, loving counsel and joyous hours spent with a personality so winning, I shall be glad. If it shall carry to others a message of inspiration, of courage, of the gospel of cheer, of love and human understanding, his chief desire will have been fulfilled and my labor repaid.

CLARA B. BURDETTE.

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THE HOUSE IN WHICH ROBERT J. BURDETTE WAS BORN
AT GREENSBORO, PENNSYLVANIA

CHAPTER I

ANCESTRY AND BOYHOOD

WHERE the Monongahela runs itself out of breath to catch up with the Ohio River, in the little County of Greene, Pennsylvania, "a county just large enough for a man to get born in", Robert Jones Burdette first sighted the "new shores" on July 30, 1844. Greensboro, the town which in later years was to be dowered by the fame and tender memories which clustered around this world-loved son, shared some of the history which Greene County at large furnished for early Pennsylvania, and the history makers included the ancestry of this remarkable man who was to become not only the apostle of the Merry Heart, but the preacher of the gospel of eternal truth.

His ancestors on his mother's side came from Wales, and settled in 1770 at Newark, Delaware, near the old Welsh Tract Church on the railroad between Washington and Philadelphia. His grandfather, Robert Jones, was born in 1795, and Anna Eberhart, his grandmother, in 1800. They were married at Greensboro on August 27, 1818. Of this union there were born twelve children, third among them being Sophia Eberhart Jones, born June 21, 1823, who was herself to become the mother of ten children, the second one being Robert Jones Burdette.

This grandfather, Robert Jones, at the beginning of the last century, was most interested in the glass works in Greene County, which also held the investments of several distinguished Americans, among them Albert

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Gallatin and John W. Nicholson, his brother-in-law. The Eberhart family, from whom he married his wife, were likewise numbered among the investors in this enterprise. Eberhart was a soldier of the Revolution and the local tradition says that he carried Lafayette from the Revolutionary battlefield of Brandywine when that distinguished and idealistic Frenchman was wounded. In 1825, according to the same tradition, when Lafayette visited Gallatin at Friendship Hill, he recognized Eberhart without an introduction, as the "strong Dutchman" who carried him from the battlefield.

The Burdette ancestors were French Huguenots who left France in 1666, five brothers of them landing in Jamestown, where they soon separated, one brother remaining in Virginia. Frederick Burdette the grandfather, was born in 1787. Of a large family of eight children by his first wife and four by the second wife, the third child, by the first marriage, Frederick Edwin, was the father of Robert Jones Burdette.

Frederick Edwin Burdette was born on May 25, 1820, at Pruntytown, Virginia, now West Virginia, a town at that time with only one street running along the cliff. Here at Greensboro, he and Sophia Eberhart Jones were married on May 25, 1841, and the blending of Welsh and French Huguenot blood was to produce a family of children, most of them strongly recipient of their forebears' characteristics. Not far away stood the oldest Baptist Church in Pennsylvania, the first building being erected in 1707. Here Mr. Burdette's ancestors were preachers away back in Colonial days, baptizing their converts in the creek, near by, and here in a most picturesque spot, the mother of Robert Jones Burdette was baptized. In the



FREDERICK EDWIN BURDETTE, FATHER OF ROBERT J. BURDETTE

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Greensboro Baptist Church today, the church where the grandfather was Deacon Jones, is a cathedral glass window, placed there in 1907 by Robert J. Burdette in memory of his mother.

Once when he returned to Greensboro in the early 80's to fill a lecture engagement he was introduced to the audience by a verbose man, who assured the people that he was well acquainted with the lecturer when he was a boy, and told with glee and enthusiasm of his boyish pranks. Mr. Burdette was obliged to remark,

"That man has a remarkable imagination, for I left this town when I was only two years old."

Referring again to this period, he wrote:

I never, positively never, did anything I was ashamed of while I remained in my native State. I never swore; I never lied; I never stole anything; I never went to a circus; I never ran away from Sunday School; I didn't go out at night; I didn't play billiards nor go to horse races. Good boy that I was, I stayed at home and entertained the family. No man, I ween, ever lived a purer life than I did while I lived in Pennsylvania.

While he had no early recollections of his own, he always possessed an affectionate loyalty for this town of his birth because of the natural setting as related by the older members of the family. And when in after years, January 7, 1882, Greensboro's "favorite son" could "reckon his latitude and longitude" and in the course of a lecture pilgrimage found himself again in Greene County, "where it poured down every furlong of the twenty-one miles from Waynesburg to my birth-place, and where every run was a torrent, every creek was a river, and old Ten Mile was as broad as the Monongahela and twice as quick", he wrote:

A man does love to go back and view the scenes among which he made his start, even though he may not remember

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much about them. "There, see there? That is the house your great-grandfather built." It was a fine house in those days evidently. Two stories, square-hewed logs, a porch all around the front. And the hands that built it, the voices that laughed and sang in it, the merry feet that danced on its oaken floors! Down through the broken roof and in the chinks of the tottering walls the sun shines today in great bars of gold, just for an instant, and then the clouds shut out the sunlight and the pitiless rain beats down upon the old log house.

The skies are gray, the trees are leafless, the hills are bare, and the rising wind moans and sighs. Drip, drip, drip, the water falls from the broken eaves, like the monotonous tick of a clock that tells the lives of four generations. But for the moaning wind and the weeping water, how still, how quiet it all is.

"My great-grandfather built it, then?" I wonder, if I wait here until the day is gone and the evening is gray and full of shadows, if he will come to the dismantled old door and with ghostly silence and old-time courtesy, bid his great-grandson welcome to the acres and the manor of his ancestors?

"And the orchard on the hill, Robert, your grandfather planted. And he built the brick house on the other side of the road."

There is the orchard still. Year after year the fragrant blooms and the robins come together, but what of the boy who planted the trees? The orchard bloom and the withered leaf of November are alike to him, and the song of the robin does not reach his ear.

"Your mother was born in that house." Ah, my mother? She was a little girl here, then? All these hills are sacred with the touch of her pattering feet; down this winding glen she has plucked the wood violets and anemones; and the birds in the swaying branches above her head have sung in wild joyousness to hear her laugh. She was a school girl here; my mother. And how pretty she was then, with the tender curve of her lips and the full-orbed eyes of brown, soft and deep as the shadows of these hills; ah, she was beautiful when she was a school girl!

Tonight, I stand in my native village, and I look at the stars that come out in the blue sky, and listen to the low-voiced



MRS. SOPHIA EBERHART BURDETTE, ROBERT J. BURDETTE'S MOTHER

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Monongahela singing at my feet, and in the stars I see the soft light of my mother's eyes, and listening to the song of the river, I know where her dear voice caught the low, mellow music that in the long ago lulled with the old-time cradle songs, her little ones to sleep.

From his mother, the son Robert inherited many of the Welsh characteristics which so markedly enriched his life. Possibly it was from this ancestry that he gained the almost singing eloquence in which his words were uttered, as though in obedience to the rhythm of a song, and so rapidly sometimes that the closest attention was necessary in order to follow him.

From father, as well as mother, came the gift of a brilliant mind and marvelous memory, which, in the long years of literary output, was to prove a storehouse of unfailing mental equipment. The Southern gift of oratory was also his as a legacy, for his father could, with argument and witty repartee, instruct and entertain by the hour on any religious or political subject. His parents were thoughtful people who looked with earnestness upon life, and were intelligently alive to the public affairs of the times. After sight and hearing were almost gone, his father was keenly alive to the current events of the day, and his letters—which were written regularly up to the time he became bedridden and it was impossible for him longer to write—in almost every instance abounded in political opinions and references. He was an uncompromising Republican; and the Democrats, he says in one of his letters, “are toiling in their State Convention today to unite as many factions of thieves as they can in order to carry the next State election.”

In religion he was a Baptist, equally as earnest in his denominational belief as in his politics. He was

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a bookkeeper by profession, though engaged in limited commercial enterprises from time to time. He managed to maintain his family of ten, two of the children having died in early life, with the thrifty help of wife and children, for the family income was limited, and "it became necessary," as the son Robert said afterwards, "for me, as the oldest boy, to contribute something at the earliest possible date to the assistance of my father and mother."

The father had somewhat the easy-going way of his Virginia forebears, and when he arrived at middle life, his health being somewhat broken, he resigned the responsibility of income producing, saying he had brought up his family, and now it was their turn, and they lovingly cared for him until he passed away in 1910.

From both sides of his ancestry Robert inherited a deep and abiding religious faith. It was that religion, which, untrammeled and unalloyed by doubt or fear, gave him his supreme confidence in God and His guardianship.

To the Pennsylvania Society of Southern California, at one of its annual meetings, referring to his successive pilgrimages in the development of his life and work, he said:

I was born in Pennsylvania, weaned in Ohio, kidnapped by Illinois, adopted by Iowa and married to California.

And so it was that his parents removed from Greensboro to Ohio in 1846, where his father established a small business in Cummingsville, near Cincinnati, but an Ohio flood made it impossible for his customers to meet their bills and he in turn was obliged to suspend business.

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Mr. Burdette revisited this spot in after years and exclaimed:

Here is Cummingsville. I wonder where is Knowlton's Grocery—it was Knowlton's, wasn't it? Twenty-five years ago I went to school in the upper story of the old stone grocery, and played in the horse trough, and fell in sundry times, to the infinite amusement of an enthusiastic audience and the demoralization of my clothes. The long, dark, covered bridge over Mill Creek that I used to people with unheard-of terrors when I went streaking through it when the deepening twilight filled it with grotesque shadows and gloomy shapes that lurked among the heavy timbers and ponderous arches.

The canal packets that used to carry us to Cincinnati; ah! you talk about floating palaces on the Mississippi! you rave about the Sound steamers or the boats of the "People's Line!" Did you ever ride on a passenger boat on the Miami Canal? There *was* grandeur for you. If I could only have changed places in those days with the boy who rode the hind mule, my restless ambition would have been satisfied!

You never rode on a canal boat in the spring, the first one that went through, to break the ice, did you? Then you have never been anywhere and never done anything. But this Cummingsville, as I look at it—pshaw, somebody has spoiled it. They have built houses all over it and a new railroad into it. The canal isn't half as wide as it used to be, Mill Creek seems to have been drained off somewhere; I would not live in Cummingsville now for a salary. They've spoiled it, everything is smaller except the houses. Look for the "house of refuge" which was my boyish terror, and I wonder where is Shaddinger's distillery that used to be the landmark on the other side of the creek, and I look at the great bearded fellows in the streets and about the depot and wonder if they are the boys I used to go to school with? If they are, it seems to me they have also changed somewhat.

It was in Cincinnati that Robert first experienced the school days, the memories of which he referred to in after years, when returning there to lecture, and wrote:

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After the lecture I shook hands with Father Dinkelman. Ah me, and he had been wondering all week if maybe I might not be his Robert after all, the urchin of five or seven summers who tried the patience and good nature of his heart years and years ago, when I wore bare feet because they fit me so comfortably. Father Dinkelman taught school in Fulton. The school house stood up like a great educational elephant on long legs of brick columns, and we climbed up to the school room by an outside stairway. I can remember exactly how it looked. You would think it could walk away on those long legs if it tried. Well, that was the first school I ever went to. There I got the first flogging I ever enjoyed, and I remember well what it was for. Winter ruled the inverted year, bare feet had gone out of fashion, and a red-hot stove glowed in the center room. I was the happy owner of a goose quill, quite new and about a foot long. I rubbed this feather slowly up and down the scarlet stove to see it curl up. It curled up beautifully. But it couldn't curl up quietly, without making a fuss about it, and if the top of the stove had blown off it couldn't have created the indignation and excitement in the school room that my little experiment with the feather did. So I was whipped. It wasn't much of a whipping, I remember, because it was a very kind hand that laid it on. But it scared me.

Other teachers, in old Fulton, Cummingsville and Peoria have since then wrestled with my native ignorance and aversion to text books, with sticks and patience and slate frames and skate straps and willow switches and one thing and another, but I have never forgotten the old market place school in Fulton and Mr. Dinkelman.

The family was lured from Cummingsville to Peoria in October, 1852, where the father was offered a position as bookkeeper in the large dry-goods store of a brother-in-law and here they remained until the family was educated and scattered, as the years bring about the natural separation of any large and active family.

But the family ties always remained strong and tender as between children and parents, and among the children themselves. This was evidenced during the

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periods of absence from home in early and later life, which were marked by long letters, descriptive, explanatory, telling in simple terms of family movements and interests, and setting forth hopes, prospects and aspirations. Here in Peoria were spent most of the formative years of his young manhood. Many are the pictures he himself has given in later years of his boyhood experiences:

The first winter we lived in Illinois [he said], we had a Christmas according to the books. My brother and I had new sleds. Not store sleds, gaudily decorated with stenciled trotting horses and a name that no self-respecting boy would give to a stone-drag, let alone a sled, but real hand sleds, made by a regularly ordained carpenter. They were not so good as they would have been had we made them ourselves, of course, but they were far and away better than store sleds. They were ready for the snow about the last week in November.

Early in December the snow came down. And stayed down. And kept on coming down. It drifted up to the windows and over the fences. The country roads were turned into embankments. When the first flakes came fluttering down, a double case of whooping-cough trundled itself into our house and took two boys by their respective necks and kept them on the warpath until the springtime brought its healing sunshine and malarial mud. Then it resigned and gave place to "fever 'n' ager." But all that winter was made of gala days to boys who could get out. Every hill was a toboggan chute, and every bob-sled or sleigh that drove past our windows dragged after it a long trail of juvenile humanity that had "hooked on."

Think of two boys entertaining the whooping-cough and gazing through the windows at that panorama of boyish joy week after week, and then talk about the martyrs! And the worst of it was, there was no need of our remaining in quarantine. But we hadn't lived out West long enough to know that. The next winter my youngest brother had it. He went to school with it, coasted with it, and one night, while skating, broke through the ice with it. It did him good. He was all through with it by the end of January. We were a tough

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people out West in those days, and a boy who couldn't help build a snow fort or go a-skating when he had the croup, was considered effeminate.

Hanging up our stockings when I was a boy was not the hollow farce which it now is. There were fireplaces by which stockings could be hung up. To hang a collection of stockings of assorted sizes around a black and cheerless register, smelling of sulphur from a defective heater, is a profanation. And hanging them in front of a cold and clammy steam radiator should be prohibited by law. It tends to make children sceptical and atheistic.

In the older days Kris Kringle had a broad chimney to come down, and a fireplace as big as a store box to jump out of. There was a mantelpiece like unto a sideboard, from which the stockings depended. Sometimes, if a long stocking were hung in the middle, insecurely held by a pin, the draft would draw it partly into the fireplace during the night. Then the whole family would be aroused, and we would go shuffling about the house, like so many shivering phantoms, hunting for the fire.

The old-fashioned fireplace had more drawbacks than the backlog. As a rule, the bigger the fireplace the colder the room. All the heat that could be drawn from every room in the house went up the big sitting room chimney. Eternal summer must have lingered somewhere up in that great stack.

Referring to his experience on trying to cross the Hinman pond on stilts:

Slowly I swayed from side to side, as I tried first one foot and then the other. A silence, deep as the grave, awful, impressive, succeeded the clamorous shouting. The starboard stilt, with one long sickening swing, eased slowly away from its fellow. I heard a girl scream—long and loud and shrill. The wind hissed in my face; an inhuman yell of high-keyed boyish voices surged up the very firmament; a mighty splash; the roar of many waters in my ears, a blinding flash, then—darkness. The next instant I lifted my head, shook the spray in a cloud from my dripping locks, blew a pailful of water out of my mouth, and struck out for land. Dripping like Horatius after his justly celebrated passage of the Tiber, wetter than

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Leander crawling out of the Hellespont, I waded ashore. And round me pressed the fellows, yelling, shrieking, dancing—

—They threw their caps
As they would hang them on the horns o' the moon,
Shouting their emulation.

They fell down and rolled in uncontrollable delight. I laid violent hands on the nearest one, smote him twice and thrice, dragged him, still shrieking, into the pond and ducked him. He did not mind it. He laughed an unearthly, strangled laugh, with his head under water. The rest of them fled from me when I threatened them, for my “mad” was up to 120 degrees in the shade, but this only lent increase to their frantic ebullitions of joy. My furious temper robbed the whole thing of what little touch of the semi-tragic or pathetic it might have possessed, and made the whole catastrophe all the funnier.

One little girl, tears in her sweet blue eyes, and her soft voice all a tremble, came close to me and pitied me, and said she was “so sorry.” Two of her girls are married, and her youngest boy is in college. They will never know how near their mother came to being thrown half way across “Hinman’s pond” in June, 1857.

I was escorted home by a volunteer bodyguard of boys of assorted sizes and all ages, who were hoarse as croup for two weeks after.

My mother rushed out of the house to meet us.

“My son!” she cried, “you have been in the pond!”

I did not know how she surmised it. Certainly nobody had told her. I now attribute it to the unerring intuition of maternal instinct.

“Mother,” I said bitterly, “I cannot tell a lie about a little thing like that. But,” I added, “I saved a boy’s life.”

“My noble boy!” she exclaimed, “how did you do that?”

“Because,” I said, in a cold, hard voice, “he got away from me; that’s how!”

And another incident held in memory by a girl playmate who may have cried when it happened, but laughs now over the boyish characteristic, she relates concerning her grandfather’s farm, which adjoined his

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grandfather Jones' farm, which was at that time about a mile and a half out of Peoria, and later became the bluff along the main street of the town:

Here Bob always spent Saturdays. On the hillside between the two farms was a patch of very fine blackberries. I would sometimes go on Friday to gather them, but finding them not fully ripe, would decide to leave them for another day. At about half-past four on Friday afternoon I would see a barefoot boy with up-turned pantaloons and his merry whistled tune trudging by, and would say, "There goes Bob Burdette, and he will not leave a blackberry for me." And sure enough, on Saturday afternoon there was not one to be found. We knew too, that he frequented our melon patch, as he admitted many years after, in a written article for one of the Peoria papers, in which he said, "There never were any finer melons grown than those in father Sneybl's truck patch."

Years afterward he wrote from this same farm at Mt. Pleasant of his grandfather:

Softly blow the winds that whisper through the grasses bending over the dear old heart, scarcely more gentle in sleep than in life.

His sister Anna releases from her memory this picture of his boyhood:

To me he was a big teasing boy, always merry, playing practical jokes, telling wonderful tales which enchanted us all, of which he seemed to have an inexhaustible supply. He learned with remarkable facility, and retained what he learned fully as remarkably, but perhaps for that very reason too close application was irksome. He was skillful with tools, for in those days boys and girls made their own games and toys. We made our own checker and chess boards and men, fashioned sleds and small wagons, in short, everything we used for amusement we must provide, and in these things he was first and foremost. He had always a cool and retentive mind, a nimble tongue and ready wit, a cheery whistle and capable hands, was beloved at home and abroad and was always what you might

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call a popular boy. But the most vivid of my memories was the whistle—he and the whistle were inseparable.

Of his fondness for the outdoors, Mr. Burdette says:

From my earliest recollection of myself, I was a "woodsy" boy. I worshipped the woods before I knew what tree worship was. The wind calling in the tree tops would lure me away from that arch-enchanter of boyhood, the circus. I grew up with this love for the woods. I am said to be the most helpless man in a city that ever lost himself in a maze of familiar streets. But I can lose you all in the woods. My idly-busy "flutter wheels" pattered on every brook in my township, and I could find my rabbit traps at night. . . .

I recall a great swamp maple that every year was the first herald to announce the silent on-coming of the radiant hosts of autumn. First of all the tree used to fling out its banners of green and gold and glorious crimson, a flaming signal for all the woods to burst into the flaming splendors of autumn, veiled by the misty tenderness of the Indian summer. And all the year, in the protecting shadow of the trees, such a wealth of woodland bloom down in the quiet hiding places of the woods where only God and the squirrels and children ever find them and see them and love them in their native haunts.

A procession of flowers from the time the first anemones lift their pearly heads, leading the pageant of white blood root and purple violets and all the summer glowed through the beauties of the changing year of bud and blossom, until the St. John's wort embroidered all the country roads; the purple aster and goldenrod rung down the "slow curtain" while maple and woodbine burned red fire for the closing transformation scene of the year.

Also his brother Charlie's reminiscences of the very early days are told when he writes:

My attitude toward Rob as a child was always one of admiration rather than amusement. He was to me a great man rather than a funny fellow. It seemed to me he knew everything and could do everything. He made a set of chess-men when I was six or seven years old, and I remember my

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wonder that he knew just what wood to get, and could cut them into the exact shape of those in the stores. Also I marveled at his ability to make an elaborate old-fashioned asparagus bed. I wondered at his story-telling ability. I never remembered the stories themselves especially, but I would help John gather old nails and scraps of metal to buy his stories, and would gladly pay double for one that he just made up as he went along, but the stories themselves were lost in the story teller.

Glimpses of his boyhood life are also given in a letter written in the later years by his brother, John W. Burdette, with whom he was associated on the Burlington *Hawk-Eye*, and who was until his death a lawyer in Chicago:

Yesterday two bare-footed boys snared gophers in Voris' field, and trudged joyfully through the woods to Kickapoo Creek, gathering violets and bluebells and columbines along Dry Run, and the day before in a leaky boat they explored the Eastern shore of Peoria Lake and the sinuosities of Farm Creek, unconscious that an anxious parent the while scanned their manœuvres with a field glass. Again they over-ran grandfather's farm and burned stumps, dropped corn, turned the grindstone, hunted eggs, swung on the grapevine, and helped pull old Phœbe out of the clay hole. Sunday morning they rode into town on the farm wagon in time to be marshalled, not without protest, into a pew, and to fidget while Dr. Weston preached. They knew every walnut, persimmon and pecan tree in two counties, and never missed a poison ivy in either.

These same boyhood days, with their plays and diversions, furnished him a vivid memory from which he gained many an inspiration and illustration for the humor of his *Hawk-Eye* days and the more serious messages of his later life.

So long as I can remember I was a happy child, and people who remember a great deal more about me than I can recall, say I was a remarkably happy, good-natured baby. I

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have heard my own dear mother testify to this effect. I always liked the world and it has always been good to me. From boyhood I have been a pet of Providence. All my life I have had everything I wanted. When I could not get a desired object, I said I did not want it.

And this philosophy stood him in good stead through many an hour of exacting labor, trying circumstance, and disappointments that would have overshadowed a less optimistic nature.

Mr. Burdette's boyhood days were not all spent in roaming the fields and "riding the water ways" in and around Peoria, and making friends with every tree, and bird, and breeze, and star, and moonbeam which glorified nature in the home land, but school and some work laid their restraining hand on the buoyant young nature with an over-quick temper and a surplus of impatience, which life's discipline finally molded into the gentlest and most patient of spirits.

The close companionship with natural beauty at a time when the mind was open and free for impressions, was to furnish a storehouse of memories from which the later imagination was to draw for color and illustration of that infinite variety of word pictures which were the joy and marvel of his audiences, and the school lessons absorbed by snatches were to be the basis of a knowledge augmented by constant reading of history and literature, especially the Bible and Shakespeare, which was to furnish a use of English that never seemed to want for a word more.

The fact that he learned too quickly, and played truant weeks at a time, though the family did not know it until Mary had to spend the summer coaching him for the fall term, may have seemed most reprehensible at the time; but the many excursions taken at such

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times into field and woods were like the dropping of seed into the fertile soil of his young mind, to blossom in color and beauty when in later years he wrote of the country about Peoria as a

beautiful, rumpled, rolling carpet of grass-green velvet, riddled with gopher holes, and flecked with grazing cattle and white clover, musical with plover, meadow larks and wild bees.

And again:

of the dust of the long cool road that went lingering in the shade of the rocks and trees on its way down to the "crick." On either side the great walls of Kickapoo sandstone rose high above the road. Famous stone for building purposes was this in the olden times. It had only one fault. It would crack, peel off and crumble when it got wet, but if you kept it dry, it would only crumble, peel off and crack. Plumy ferns waved in the rocks, and the bells of the columbine swinging in the wind fairly tinkled as we passed. Branching oaks shook hands across the road. Broad-leaved hickories rustled back our shouts, and down in the valley ghostly cottonwoods and slender-fingered willows waved a welcome to us.

After these varied "in and out" school days he entered the Hinman school, and though he afterward gave many a mirthful picture of Peoria school days, one was eventually to make Hinman School remembered by many who were never its pupils. The "strike at Hinman's," partially fanciful, partially, perhaps, based upon fact, has been read and re-read by thousands of Illinoisians, as well as others:

Away back in the fifties, "Hinman's" was not only the best school in Peoria, but it was the greatest school in the world. I sincerely thought so then, and as I was a very lively part of it, I should know. Mr. Hinman was the faculty, and he was sufficiently numerous to demonstrate the cube root with one hand and maintain discipline with the other. Dear old man! Boys and girls with grandchildren love him today, and think

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of him among their blessings. He was superintendent of public instruction, board of education, school trustee, county superintendent, principal of the high school and janitor. He had a pleasant smile, a genius for mathematics and a West Point idea of forbearance and discipline. He carried upon his person a grip that would make the imported malady which mocks that name in these degenerate days, call itself slack, in very terror at having assumed the wrong title.

We used to have general exercises on Friday afternoons. The most exciting feature of this weekly frivolity consisted of a free-for-all exercise in mental arithmetic. Mr. Hinman gave out lists of numbers, beginning with the easy ones and speaking slowly. Each succeeding list he dictated more rapidly and with ever-increasing complications of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, until at last he was giving them out faster than he could talk. One by one the pupils dropped out of the race with despairing faces but always at the closing peremptory: "Answer?" at least a dozen hands shot into the air and as many voices shouted the correct answer. We didn't have many books and the curriculum of an Illinois school in those days was not academic; but two things the children could do, they could spell as well as the dictionary and they could handle figures. Some of the fellows fairly wallowed in them. I didn't. I simply drowned. I drowned in the shallowest pond of the numbers that ever spread itself on the page. And even unto this day I do the same.

Well, one year the teacher introduced an innovation—"compositions" by the girls and "speaking" pieces by the boys. It was easy enough for the girls. He had only to read the beautiful thought that "spring is the pleasantest season of the year". Now and then a new girl from the east, awfully precise, would begin her essay, "Spring is the most pleasant season of the year", and her effort would be called down with derisive laughter, whereat she walked to her seat, very stiffly with a proud, dry-eyed look in her face, only to lay her head upon her desk when she reached it and weep silently until school closed. But speaking pieces did not meet with the favor of the boys, save one or two boys who were in training by their parents for congressmen or presidents.

The rest of us, who were just boys, with no desire to be anything else, endured the tyranny of compositions about a

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month, and then resolved to abolish the whole business by a general revolt. Big and little, we agreed to stand by each other, break up the new exercise and get back to the old order of things, the hurdle races in mental arithmetic and the geographical chants which we could run and intone together.

Was I a mutineer? Well, say, son, your pa was a constitutional conspirator. He was in the color guard. You see, the first boy called on for a declamation was to announce the strike, and as my name stood very high—in the alphabetical roll of pupils—I had an excellent chance of leading the assaulting column, a distinction for which I was not at all ambitious, being a stripling of tender years, ruddy countenance and sensitive feelings. However, I was stiffened to my soul, girded on my armor by slipping an atlas back under my jacket, and was ready for the fray, feeling a little terrified shiver of delight as I thought that the first lick Mr. Hinman gave me would make him think he had broken my back.

The hour of speaking pieces, an hour big with fate, arrived on time. A boy named Aby Abbot was called up ahead of me, but he happened to be one of the presidential aspirants (he was mate on an Illinois steamboat, stern-wheeler, at that, the last I knew of him) and, of course, he flunked and said his piece—a sadly prophetic selection—"Mr. President, it is natural for men to indulge in the illusions of hope." We made such suggestive and threatening gestures at him, however, when Mr. Hinman was not looking, that he forgot half his "piece", broke down and cried. He also cried after school, a little more bitterly and with far better reason.

Then, after an awful pause, in which the conspirators could hear the beating of each other's hearts, my name was called.

I sat still at my desk and said:

"I ain't going to speak no piece."

Mr. Hinman looked greatly surprised and asked:

"Why not, Robert?"

"Because there ain't going to be any more speaking pieces."

The teacher's eyes grew round and big as he inquired:

"Who says there will not?"

I said, in slightly firmer tones, as I realized that the moment had come for dragging the rest of the rebels into court:

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"All of us boys."

But Mr. Hinman smiled and said quietly that he guessed there would be a "little more speaking before the close of the season". Then, laying his hand on my shoulder with most punctilious but chilling courtesy, he invited me to the rostrum. The "rostrum" was twenty-five feet distant, but I arrived there on schedule time and only touched my feet to the floor twice on the way.

And then and there under Mr. Hinman's judicious coaching before the assembled school, and with feelings, nay, emotions which I now shudder to recall, I did my first "song and dance". Many times before had I stepped off a sole-cachuca to the staccato pleading of a fragment of slate frame, upon which my tutor was a gifted performer, but never until that day did I accompany myself with words. Boy-like I had chosen for my piece a poem sweetly expressive of those peaceful virtues which I most heartily despised. So that my performance at the inauguration of the strike as Mr. Hinman conducted the overture, ran something like this:

"Oh, not for me (whack) is the rolling (whack) drum,
Or the (whack) (whack) trumpet's wild (whack) appeal
(whack);
Or the cry (swish, whack) of (boo-hoo-hoo) war when (whack)
foe is coming (ouch)
Or the (ow-wow) brightly (whack) flashing (whack, whack)
steel (wah-hoo, wah-hoo)."

Thus I illustrated the seven stanzas of this beautiful poem. I really had selected it to please my mother, whom I had invited to be present when I supposed I would deliver it. But the fact that she attended a missionary meeting at the Baptist church that afternoon made me a friend of missions forever. Suffice it to say, then, that my pantomime kept pace and time with Mr. Hinman's system of punctuation until the last line was sobbed and I went to my seat in a mist of tears and sat down gingerly and sideways, only wondering why an inscrutable Providence had given to the rugged rhinoceros the hide which in the eternal fitness of things had plainly been prepared for the schoolboy.

But I quickly forgot my own sorrow and dried my tears with laughter in the enjoyment of the subsequent acts of the

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opera. As the chorus developed and the plot and action, Mr. Hinman, who had been somewhat gentle with me, dealt firmly with the larger boy who followed, and there was a scene of revelry for the next twenty minutes. The old man shook Bill Morrison until his teeth rattled so you couldn't hear him cry. He hit Mickey McCann, the tough boy from the lower prairie, and Mickey ran out and lay down in the snow to cool off. He hit Jake Bailey across the legs with a slate frame and it hurt so that Jake couldn't howl—he just opened his mouth wide, held up his hands, gasped and forgot his own name. He pushed Bill Haskell into a seat and the bench broke.

He ran across the room and reached out for Lem Harkins, and Lem had a fit before the old man touched him. He shook Dan Stevenson for two minutes and when he let him go Dan walked around his own desk five times before he could find it and then he couldn't sit down without holding on. He whipped the two Knowltons with a skate strap in each hand at the same time, and the Greenwood family all at once with a girl's skipping rope, and they raised such a united cry and wail that the clock stopped.

He took a twist in Bill Rodecker's front hair, and Bill slept with his eyes open for a week. He kept the atmosphere of that school room full of dust and splinters and lint, weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth until he reached the end of the alphabet and all hearts ached and wearied of the inhuman strife and wicked contentions. Then he stood up before us a sickening tangle of slate frames, straps, ebony ferule and skipping rope, a smile on his kind face, and asked in clear triumphant tones:

“Who says there isn't going to be any more speaking pieces?”

And every last boy in that school sprang to his feet. Standing there as one human being with one great mouth, we shrieked in concerted anguish:

“Nobody don't!”

And your pa, my son, who led that strike, has been “speaking pieces” ever since.

On the occasion of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Peoria High School in 1906,

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his niece, Ellen Muir, read a letter from Mr. Burdette, which tells the story of his high school days there:

1861 was a class composed exclusively of "stars". There was too much talent to play in one combination—the house wouldn't hold the people. So Robert Gregg and Sewell Ford were graduated in the spring, and at Christmas Mary Luccock, John Chalmers and I stepped over the threshold. I stood at the foot of the class, but by persuasion mingled with guile, I induced my colleagues to adopt for our class motto, "Ex pede Herculem", and once more I sat in the red cart close to the driver, with the unplugged melons sowed behind us in appetizing rows, up to the load line. My "commencement essay" foreshadowed my subsequent career as a statesman. It was "The Press and the Ballot Box". I have preserved that rather remarkable state paper. Would you like to see it? For a hundred thousand dollars you may. I sometimes read it myself. It mitigates the horror of approaching death. Nothing, my children, is ever written in vain, except a protest against the unfair assessment of taxes on your own property.

When the duplex class of '61 went out, I ceased to be an actor, factor or malefactor in the drama of the Peoria High School. My school days were ended, but my education had just begun. Because there has never been any school since that day to divide my affection and loyalty, my love for the old school has been constant, deepening in its loyalty and tenderness as the years multiply between today and the yesterdays at school. The days and the boys and the girls that were and are "dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart".

I send my greeting to the school of yesterday and today—I send to the graduates the love of an Old Boy. To think that more than forty years ago I knew nearly as much as the youngest and most omniscient of you. Come up into the bigger and higher school where the desks are more comfortable, the lessons are harder, the hours longer, the teachers more pitilessly exacting, where the study is more of a joy and the rewards are higher and more justly bestowed.

Come right up into the cart and sit beside your Uncle Robert. Then, whenever you're hungry, you may cut a nice, ripe, juicy melon. The cart's full of 'em.

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Er—just before I close. About the melons. Don't want to mislead you. There are plenty of melons. In fact, the whole world is one big melon patch. And it is true that some carts are empty and some are full of melons. But, one little pointer, my children. You've got to pick your own melons and load 'em into the cart yourself. Then you're sure they are there. God bless every boy and girl of you.

In a newspaper letter touching revived memories of all his school days, he says:

I was a maverick when I started to school, but successive dynasties of instruction put the proper brand all over me before I was finally broken to the yoke and plow. I wasn't professedly a believer in corporal punishment, but I was better than most professors and nominal believers—I practiced the doctrine right along; at least, I lived up to it; it did me good and does me good unto this day. It makes a great many things beautifully clear to me. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous," says the great apostle, "but grievous." I don't need any commentary on that passage. I am a seminary exegete on that part of the Epistle.

But I can truly say that all my chastisements at school are at this day among my most joyous memories. I laugh every time I think of one. Not so much about the whipping, as over the recollection of the jolly good time I had earning it. I was as recklessly happy as a man who is acquiring the gout for his grandsons.

But all that went in the curriculum; my school days were happy, seriously speaking. I was a happy boy; all the year round I was happy. And in the loyal, tender, loving niches of my heart I have builded the fairest shrines my affection can fashion, wherein I have placed the images of the saints who were my school teachers. Some of them are living; some are dead; all are old and gray. But there, where I alone can see them, they are all living; they are all young, with the morning light of love and enthusiasm shining in their faces. Memory makes them beautiful, and the years cluster their brows like stars.

Coincident with the "barefoot days" and the school days was an influence which was to act upon one of the



DR. HENRY G. WESTON, WHOM MR. BURDETTE TITLED "GENTLEST OF ALL PROPHETS"

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strongest forces of Robert's nature. Henry G. Weston, pastor of the Baptist Church, and friend of the Burdette family was the preacher from whom Robert was to gain his most serious impression of life and work. Mr. Burdette's admiration for him was great, and his love tender through all the years, and he gives us some characteristic reminiscences in a sketch written many years later, 1902, when he himself was a preacher of the Gospel and Dr. Weston was entering the afternoon time of his life:

Tall, erect as a soldier, strong as an athlete; a perfectly healthy man with no record of triumphant prowess in golf, tennis or football; never much of a fisherman, nothing at all of a hunter—I know he never fired a gun in his life, and I do not think he ever had one in his hand; never at all given to "that tired feeling", nor addicted to long vacations; a hale man at eighty-two, doing his daily work, preaching and teaching; making long railway journeys to meet his engagements; eating his bread with his own teeth; all his life a preacher, never anything else than a preacher and a teacher of preachers—Henry G. Weston, D.D., LL.D., gentlest of the prophets! Mention his name anywhere in this United States, and some face in the listening circle will lighten with love in the eyes and a tender smile wreathing the lips. When he makes heaven glad with his coming his memory in this world will be a perfume, old-fashioned and sweet as the odor of the roses at Crozer.

As life within the home was daily fired and stimulated by religious and political discussions, so education from without was to be a co-mingling of these two strong inspirations. During these same Peoria days, Mr. Burdette was as a boy to hear his first political debates from the rugged men of that western country, who oftentimes sat on the rocks by the old Monroe's Mill on the Kickapoo and talked of the things then agitating the Union. Lincoln and Douglas were stumping the State of Illinois. Fremont's name was the first

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Republican battle cry, and “free soil, free press, free men, free speech and Fremont” rang through the land like the glad prophecy it was. The names of Lincoln, Douglas, Buchanan, Pierce, Scott and Seward were heard often in the wayside and village arguments and debates of those days.

Out of the boyish conclusions reached from the hearing of those arguments was formed the determination that led him, after the election of Lincoln and the beginning of the Civil War, as a lad of eighteen, to enlist with the Illinois regiment that went from Peoria.

Regarding this same period, an aunt of his, of whom he was very fond, and with whom he corresponded most affectionately up to the very last months of his life, writes:

Just at the beginning of the Civil War, Rob wrote me that he belonged to the Wide-awake Club, and that they were coming down to run Brackenbridge and Bell voters into the sea, sink South Carolina, etc. I was furious and wrote back to him to “come on, Virginia has six feet of ground for every Yankee that invades her sacred soil.” Brother Fred, Rob’s father, wrote to my father that while he enjoyed our “brilliant” correspondence, he doubted the propriety of allowing it in the exciting times, so we were required to write of other things than war. We continued to have our fun, however, for he always had an imaginary sweetheart for each of us.

CHAPTER II

ARMY EXPERIENCE

OLDER school boys had enlisted as volunteers and gone to the Bar. Lincoln had issued his call for volunteers for three years or for the war. The question of enlistment had been tearfully and prayerfully discussed at home in the dark days of early 1862. Mr. Burdette's father and mother were intense in their patriotism and loyalty to the North and its cause, and it was agreed that he should go when he had reached his eighteenth birthday.

In his "Drums of the 47th," a book of recollections of incidents of his service, he says:

I was eighteen years old that thirtieth of July. I was lying in the shade of a cherry tree, and at a window nearby my mother was sewing. She sang as she sewed, in a sweet fashion that women have—singing, rocking, thinking, dreaming; the swaying sewing-chair weaving all those occupations together in a reverie-pattern that is half real, half vision. She was singing sweet old songs that I had heard her sing ever since I was a baby—songs of love, and home, and peace; a song of the robin, and the carrier dove, and one little French song of which I was very fond, "Jeanette and Jeannot."

It was such a quiet, dreamy, peaceful July afternoon. There was the sound of a gentle wind in the top of the cherry tree, softly carrying an aeolian accompaniment to my mother's singing. Once a robin called. A bush of "old-fashioned roses" perfumed the breath of the song. A cricket chirped in the grass.

Boom! A siege-gun fired away off down in Charleston, and a shell burst above Fort Sumter, wreathing an angry halo about the most beautiful flag the sunshine ever kissed. From ocean to ocean the land quivered as with the shock of an earthquake. Far away, from the ramparts of Sumter, a bugle shrilled across the states as though it were the voice of the

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trumpet of the angel calling the sheeted dead to rise. And close at hand the flam, flam, flam of a drum broke into the wild thrill of the long roll—the fierce snarls of the dogs of war, awakened by that signal shot from Beauregard's batteries.

I leaped to my feet, seized my cap and ran to the window to wind my arms around my mother's neck.

"Mother," I said, "I'm going!"

Her beautiful face turned white. She held me close to her heart a long, silent, praying time. Then she held me off and kissed me—a kiss so tender that it rests upon my lips today—and said:

"God bless my boy!"

And with my mother's blessing I hurried down to the recruiting station, and soon I marched away with a column of men and boys, still keeping step to the drum.

It was to be more than three years before he saw again the mother who bade him a tearful good-bye, and before he knew again the peace of a home and the shade of the cherry tree.

All the way [he says], from Peoria to Corinth, from Corinth to Vicksburg, up the Red River Country, down to Mobile and Fort Blakely and back to Tupelo and Selma, the voice and the song of the prayer followed me and at last led me back home.

The record of his service found among his papers in his own handwriting shows that he enlisted at Peoria, Illinois, on August 4, 1862, in Company "C" of the 47th Illinois Infantry Regiment, and was discharged at Selma, Alabama, July 20, 1865, and below that record is a note in which he says:

Detailed as orderly at Headquarters, 3rd Division, 15th Army Corps, Brigadier General Asboth commanding. Remained at these headquarters (afterward 1st Division, 16th Army Corps) until discharged at Selma, Alabama, at the close of the war, July 20, 1865.

And upon a leaf from an old memorandum book was found a list of the engagements in which he had taken



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part, numbered from 1 to 21, beginning with Jackson, Mississippi, May 14, 1863, and ending with Spanish Fort, April 8, 1865. He received honorable mention for bravery in the Siege of Vicksburg.

His letters written in the course of the war to the various members of his family at Peoria were graphic, and sent with such regularity as was possible. Fortunately they were preserved with tender care in the family archives, and came into my hands after his death—boyish descriptions of battles and life in camp, expressions of patriotic resolve, humorous accounts of his experiences when there was humor to be had, wise and admonitory paragraphs to his brothers and sisters, and always declarations of his good health and cheerfulness. Fifty years afterwards he wrote:

I went into the army a light-hearted boy, with a face as smooth as a girl's and hair as brown as my beautiful mother's. I fought through more than a score of battles and romped through more than a hundred frolics. I had the rollicking time of my life and came home stronger than an athlete, with robust health builded to last the rest of my life.

He was tantalizingly short and small of stature:

When I went into the recruiting office [he wrote], two lieutenants of the Forty-seventh Illinois Regiment, Samuel A. L. Law of C Company and Frank Biser of B, looked at me without the slightest emotion of interest. When I told them what I wanted, they smiled, and Lieutenant Biser shook his head. But Lieutenant Law spoke encouragingly, and pointed to the standard of military height, a pine stick standing out from the wall in rigid uncompromising insistence, five feet three inches from the floor. As I walked toward it I could see it slide up, until it seemed to lift itself seven feet above my ambitious head. If I could have kept up the stretching strain I put on every longitudinal muscle in my body in that minute of fate, I would have been as tall as Abraham Lincoln by the close of the war. As it was, when I stepped under that Rhada-

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manthine rod, I felt my scalp-lock, which was very likely standing on end with apprehension, brush lightly against it. The officers laughed, and one of them dictated to the sergeant-clerk:

“Five feet three.”

My heart beat calmly once more and I shrank back to my normal five feet two and seven-eighths plus. That was nearly fifty years ago, and taking all the thought I could to add to my stature, I have only passed that tantalizing standard an inch and a half. I received certain instructions concerning my reporting at the office daily, and as I passed out I heard the sergeant say: “That child will serve most of his time in the hospital.”

But in three years’ service I never saw the inside of a hospital save on such occasions as I was detailed to nurse the grown men; I never lost one day off duty on account of sickness.

There were times when I was so dead tired, and worn out, and faint with hunger that my legs wabbled as I walked, and my eyes were so dry and hot with lack of sleep, that I would have given a month’s pay for floor space in Andersonville prison. But whenever I turned my eyes longingly toward the roadside, passing a good place to “drop out”, I could hear that big sergeant’s pitying sneer, and I braced up and offered to carry my file-leader’s knapsack for a mile or two.

The 47th was a fighting regiment, and fought under five colonels, all of whom he was accustomed to call “old-fashioned” in that they rode close up to the firing line. John Briner, who marched away with the 47th from Peoria in ’61, died in the service, being re-appointed Colonel of the re-organized regiment in 1865. William A. Thrush was killed at the head of his regiment at the battle of Corinth, October 3, 1862. John N. Cromwell, “boy Colonel”, was killed at Jackson, Miss., May 16, 1863. John Dixon McClure was wounded nigh to death in the siege of Vicksburg, June 20, 1863. Daniel L. Miles, Lieutenant-Colonel, was killed in the battle of Farmington, Miss. In truth, the 47th was a fighting regiment.

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It was not to be long after his enlistment before, as a recruit, he had his first impression of battle, for at Corinth, he says in his recollections:

Twenty-eight thousand Confederates dashed themselves against our line of defense those two savage days like waves of the sea. My own regiment lay in the ditch of Battery Robinette, which bore the brunt of the final attack. Curtains of infantry connected the forest. For a wall of sand is as good to stop the sea as a sea-wall of granite. Twenty thousand boys in blue there were under Rosecrans, fresh from fighting the same foes at Iuka, where our major, Cromwell, had been taken prisoner. The fighting on the third at Corinth punished the Federals severely. At half-past nine o'clock on the morning of the fourth, Price's column, formed en masse, came charging along the Bolivar road like a human torrent. It moved in phalanx shape through a storm of iron and lead from batteries and infantry, and drove through all opposition, the men bowing their faces, but pushing on, as men crowd their way against a driving storm. As it came within rifle range the phalanx divided into two columns covering the front of the forts. It captured Fort Richardson and General Rosecrans' headquarters, in front of which seven dead Confederates were found after the battle. It seemed that nothing could stop that onrush of determined men. But in the score of minutes that so often decides a battle, the Fifty-sixth Illinois recaptured Battery Richardson, the heavy assaulting column was thrown into confusion, and the splendid charge was turned into a swift retreat. The whole affair lasted half an hour.

Meanwhile Van Dorn's column, which should have co-operated simultaneously with that under Price, but was delayed by the natural obstacles of broken ground, tangled swamps and densely-wooded thickets, came charging in on the Chewalla road. Texans and Mississippians these fighters were. I was greatly disturbed to perceive they were headed straight for our position—Forts Williams and Robinette; but then I thought of those fearful Parrott thirty-pounders and the terrible guns of our own Robinette trained point-blank on that charging whirlwind. Colonel Rogers himself led his Texans, densely formed, in a close charging line massed four deep, the Mississippians keeping pace with them.

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The infantrymen sprang to their feet. Volley after volley of musketry helped the big guns tear the assaulting lines to pieces. But they kept on. They struck the infantry supports as a great combing wave strikes a reef. They beat us down with their muskets and thrust us away with bayonet lunges. Colonel Rogers leaped the ditch at the head of his men and was killed on the slope of the parapet. We saw the soldiers in gray swarming into the embrasures, fighting with the gunners who met them hand-to-hand with muskets and sponge staffs. The Ohio brigade of Stanley's division, firing withering volleys, came to the rescue of the forts and their supports, and Confederate reinforcements hurried into the maelstrom of fire and steel. Our Colonel, Thrush, was killed, shot through the heart. Step by step we crowded them back until they shared the fate of the other column and turned in retreat. The battle was over.

That night I was detailed on duty with the parties that go over the field, looking for the wounded and the dead, succoring the living, burying the dead. The savage day had been a baptism of fire. The night was a baptism of tears. The day had been the terrible inspiration of battle. The night was the meditation of sorrow. On the battle-field Death was the grisly King of Terrors, wearing the black plumes of a mighty conqueror, naked, horrible, and bloody in his brutality.

We found a dead Confederate lying on his back, his out-spread fingers stretched across the stock of his rifle lying at his side. He was one of Rogers' Texans. Fifty-seven of them we had found lying in the ditch of Battery Robinette. I covered his face with the slouch hat still on his head and took off the haversack slung to his neck that it might not swing as we carried him to his sleeping-chamber, so cool and quiet and dark after the savage tumult and dust and smoke of that day of horror.

"Empty, isn't it?" asked the soldier working with me. I put my hand in it and drew forth a handful of roasted acorns. I showed them to my comrade. "That's all," I said.

"And he's been fighting like a tiger for two days on that hog's forage," he commented. We gazed at the face of the dead soldier with new feelings. By and by my comrade said:

"I hate this war and the thing that caused it. I was

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taught to hate slavery before I was taught to hate sin. I love the Union as I love my mother—better. I think this is the wickedest war that was ever waged in the world. But this”—and he took some of the acorns from my hand—“this is what I call patriotism.”

“Comrade,” I said, “I’m going to send these home to the Peoria *Transcript*. I want them to tell the editor this war won’t be ended until there is a total failure of the acorn crop. I want the folks at home to know what manner of men we are fighting.”

That was early in my experience as a soldier. I never changed my opinion of the cause of the Confederacy. I was more and more devoted to the Union as the war went on. But I never questioned the sincerity of the men in the Confederate ranks. I realized how dearly a man must love his own section who would fight for it on parched acorns. I wished that his love and patriotism had been broader, reaching from the Gulf to the Lakes—a love for the Union rather than for a state. But I understood him. I hated his attitude toward the Union as much as ever, but I admired the man. And after Corinth I never could get a prisoner half-way to the rear and have anything left in my haversack.

Oh, I too have suffered the pangs of hunger for my dear country, as all soldiers have done now and then. But not as that Confederate soldier did. We went hungry at times, when rain and mud or the interference of the enemy detained the supply trains. But that man half-starved. That’s different.

After the battle of Nashville, December, 1864, we marched in pursuit of Hood as far as the Tennessee River. There, for more than a week, we subsisted on corn—not canned corn and not even popcorn, but common, yellow field corn on the cob. And the row we suffering hero-martyrs made about it!

A soldier was carrying a couple of ears of corn to a campfire to parch for his supper. A mule tethered nearby saw him and lifted up its dreadful voice in piteous braying. The indignant warrior smote him in the jaw, crying, “You get nine pounds a day and I get only five, you long-eared glutton, and now you want half of mine!”

Referring to the courage and fear of a soldier, he once wrote:

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Why, then, does the coward even start to war?

For certainly he does start, in every war that is declared. He is found in every army. He goes to war voluntarily, many times eagerly, for the cowardly temperament is volatile. A rabbit is sprightlier than a bulldog. The coward may start to war with the valor born of ignorance.

When I enlisted, I had but one well-defined fear. I was afraid the war would be over before I got into a battle. Every time I got hold of a newspaper or news reached the camp by courier, my heart sank with the disloyal dread that that old Grant—all generals are “old” to the soldier—had utterly crushed the enemy with one terrible blow, and I would have to go home without one battle story. It was terrible. However, it didn’t happen. Though many a time afterward I wished it had.

I got into my battle. After that a second fear displaced the first. I was afraid the war would be ended before I got into another. And again my fear was an illusion. The war kept on until I got into a score of fights.

And then, seeing perhaps that I was never going to quit first, the hosts of the Confederacy agreed to stop if I would. At least, that is the way it appeared to me.

His letters home give us the most intimate account of his life and thought during these perilous days. His father he boyishly refers to in his letters as “the General”, and in one of these he unfolds a view of homesickness and longing in the heart of many a soldier boy of the early sixties:

I have nothing else to think of but home, and must write to keep off homesickness. It is my favorite way of filling up my unoccupied hours. I would rather write home than read, or even eat,

and for a healthy soldier this last was surely an abundant testimony.

In May, 1863, he was “before Vicksburg”, as a letter written to his father bears testimony. This was written, he says, on “Secesh paper”. It was his first

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battle, and he wrote of it on May 23d, a little more than a week afterwards:

We neared Jackson on the 13th, trudging along through the dust, when, on coming to the top of a high hill, we saw the 5th Minnesota deployed as skirmishers, and advancing slowly into the woods. That looked like fun.

The brigade formed in line of battle on double quick and loaded, but no enemy was found, so we laid on our arms all night, and next morning in a drenching rain started for Jackson. The boys kept their spirits up remarkably well all day, for we were very close to the enemy, and we were all resolved to eat supper at Jackson.

About eleven o'clock we came upon the Rebs. Our batteries were placed in position and the 47th were placed to support the 2d Iowa Battery. The shell and shot came over our way quite lively, but we all lay down and they passed over us, but the "whoo-oo-oo" of rifle shell sounded around us quite merrily. We were on the brow of a high hill overlooking a wide open field. Through this ran a creek, for which we were contending.

The Rebs drove our skirmishers back up the field and mortally wounded a cannoneer in Waterhouse battery. Our bully 2d Iowa boys soon silenced the Rebel batteries, and then the order came for us to advance and take the creek. Our officers were all very cool and set good examples for their men. When we received the order to advance, Col. Cromwell asked if he would have time to light his pipe, and rode along our line holloaing for a match. We advanced with fixed bayonets, the 2d Brigade in advance driving the "Rebs" steadily before us, and I must give the rascals credit for falling back in fine style.

We chased them away from the creek, through which we charged in water waist-deep, ran them through the woods into their works, where they checked us for a while, but the 2d Brigade could not be refused, so we up and at 'em and were the first troops in Jackson. We left Jackson on the 16th and marched all night. We are now in front of Vicksburg in easy range of their batteries, but the country is so full of deep ravines that we are perfectly safe.

That was the boy's account of the first skirmish in

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which he carried a musket. In "Drums of the 47th" there is an account of the same skirmish from the viewpoint of the man approaching 70:

A dull staccato thunder of guns in the distant front, a galloping staff-orderly giving an order to Colonel Cromwell, which he shouted to us; a sudden barking of many commands from the line officers; a double-quicking of the column into the line, and almost in the time I have written it we were in line of battle in the woods before Jackson, Mississippi.

I heard Captain Frank Biser shouting his customary "instructions to skirmishers" as he deployed A and B companies into the skirmish line, and they disappeared amid the scrub oaks: "Keep up a rapid fire in the general direction of the enemy, and yell all the time!" He was very specific regarding the kind of "yelling", which was to be emphatically sulphurous. The regiment followed to the brow of the hill that looked down on the creek, winding in muddy swirls and many meanderings across the level meadows.

Far to our right we could hear our own battery, the Second Iowa, its bronze Napoleons throbbing like a heart of fire. And at our left the Waterhouse Battery, of Chicago, was baying like a wolf-hound at the gray battalions down by the little Pearl River. We were supporting that battery. And we were ordered to lie down and keep ourselves out of sight.

This seemed to me excessive caution. I was a recruit in my first battle. I called it a battle. The old soldiers spoke of it as a fight. Whatever it was, I wanted to see it. I rose up on my knees to look about me. It didn't look like any picture of a battle I ever saw in a book. The man with whom I touched elbows at my right, Doc Worthington, of Peoria, and an old schoolfellow before we were comrades, said with a note of admiration in his voice:

"Haven't those fellows got a splendid line?"

I saw a long line of gray-jacketed skirmishers doing a beautiful skirmish drill. Puff-puff-puff, the little clouds of blue smoke broke out from the gray line moving through the mist that was drifting across the field. I saw the blue-bloused skirmish line come into view from the woods at the foot of the hill. I saw a man stumble and fall on his face. Not until he

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did not get up and go on with the advancing line did I realize that he had not stumbled.

I had a strange trouble with my breath for a boy with lungs like a colt and a heart that is strong unto this day. An officer came riding down the line, pulled up his horse, asked a soldier for a match, calmly lighted his pipe, puffed it into energetic action, and rode down the hill after the skirmishers. How I admired his wonderful coolness! By the time I went into the next battle I knew that the pipe trick was not a symptom of daredevil, reckless coolness, but only of natural human nervousness. The man smoked because he was too nervous not to.

I saw the skirmishers now and then rush suddenly together, rallying by fours and squads as a little troop of cavalry menaced the line with a rush—a charge, we called it then. I saw them deploy just as quickly, and heard them cheering as a rapid volley admonished the troopers with a few empty saddles. Then I saw the gray line advance resolutely, and with much dodging and zigzagging our own skirmishers were slowly falling back to their line of support. The guns of the Waterhouse battery, fiercely augmenting their clamorous barking, suddenly fell silent. The gunners swabbed out the hot cannon and then stood at their stations.

"Why do they stop firing?" I asked.

"They are letting the guns cool," said a corporal.

"They are going to get out of this," said Worthington; "those fellows are coming up the hill."

I was looking at a young artilleryman. He was half seated on the hub of one of the Waterhouse guns, resting his face against the arm with which he cushioned the rim of the wheel. He was a boy about my own age, not over nineteen. He was tired, for serving the guns in hot action is fast work and hard work. His lips were parted with his quick breathing. He lifted his face and smiled at some remark made to him by one of the gunners. His face was handsome in its animation—a beautiful boy.

I heard a sound such as I had never heard before, but I shuddered as I heard it—dull and cruel and deadly. A hideous sound, fearsome and hateful.

The young artilleryman leaped to his feet, his face lifted

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toward the gray sky, his hands tossed above his head. He reeled, and as a comrade sprang to catch him in his arms the boy cried, his voice shrilling down the line:

“Murder, boys! Murder! Oh, murder!”

He clasped his hands over a splotch of crimson that was widening on the blue breast of his red-trimmed jacket and fell into the strong arms of the comrades who carried him to the rear. Him, or—It.

The rain began again and the warm drops fell like tears upon his white face, as though angels were weeping above him. I watched the men carry him away to where the yellow flag marked the mercy station of the field hospital.

The bugles called sweetly and imperiously, the colonel's voice rang out stern, peremptory, inspiring, the line sprang to its feet, and with mighty shouting rushed forward like unleashed dogs of war. Thundering guns, rattling musketry, cheering and more cheering, a triumphant charge, a wild pursuit, a mad dash—we were over the works and into the city. That night my regiment bivouacked in the pleasant grounds of the beautiful capitol of Mississippi. My first battle, and it was a victory—a victory—a brilliant victory! And I had a soldier's part in it. How proud I was! I could not sleep. I mentally indited a dozen letters home. And again I whispered a prayer, and looked up my good-night at the stars.

Calm, silent, tranquil. Undimmed by the smoke of the guns. Unstained by the blood that had smeared the meadow daisies. Unshaken by all the tumult of charging battalions. Sweet and pure, the glittering constellations looked down upon the trampled field and the dismantled forts. Looked down upon the little world in which men lived and slept; loved and hated; fought and died. The quiet, blessed, peaceful starlight.

Far away, yet thrilling as a night alarm, came dropping down through the starlight the cry that went up from the sodden earth ages and ages ago:

“Murder! Oh, murder!”

My thoughts went northward, because I could not sleep, to the little home in Peoria where mother and sisters waited for me. Slowly, although I tried to keep them away, my thoughts came back to the battery on the brow of the wooded hill where the purple violets smiled through the strangling

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smoke of the guns. With a troubled mind I thought of other mothers and sisters who waited in northern and southern homes. I laid my arm across my face to shut out something that dimmed the starlight and marred the glory of victory with the stain that marked the altar of prayer and sacrifice when the world was young and fair. I would not allow myself to think of hideous and hateful things. I would think of love and home, and the whistle of the robin, the song of the meadow-lark, and the mother voice, soft and sweet and dovelike, cooing the old love songs.

Still, even as I slept and dreamed of a victory won and of other fields of glory and triumph to come, down through the starlight came the echo of that fainting cry under the wheels of the guns:

“Murder! Murder, boys! Oh, murder!”

He had his part, too, in the assault before Vicksburg, and concerning this says:

I was only in one little corner of it, very small, exceeding hot, and extremely dangerous, so that my personal observations, being much concerned with myself, were limited by distracting circumstances.

Anyhow, without much regard to my convenience, the assault was ordered at ten o'clock that beautiful May morning. Ten hours of the most terrific cannonading I ever heard; the assailing army storming the fortified position of an enemy almost its equal in numerical strength, when one man in a fort is considered the equivalent of seven assailants; Sherman, McClellan, McPherson, Mower, Quinby, Tuttle, Steele, A. J. Smith and Carr, wardogs of mettle and valor.

Hour after hour they charged the great bastioned forts, each time to be swept back with ranks thinned and scattered, but ready for another grapple. At half-past three in the afternoon the brigade to which my regiment belonged—Mower's, then the third brigade of Tuttle's division, Fifteenth Army Corps (Sherman's)—was ordered, as a forlorn hope, to storm the bastion at Walnut Hills. We charged in column, and as we swept up the hill from the shelter of the ravine, we passed a little group of great generals watching us “go in”—Sherman,

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Tuttle and Mower, our corps, division and brigade commanders. Who wouldn't fight before such a "cloud of witnesses"?

As we passed, Mower detached himself from the group and placed himself at the head of his own men. When we reached the crest of the hill we were met by a withering fire from the fort and stockade and breastworks that struck us in our faces like a whirlwind of flame and iron. We fought through it, close to the fort, when we were finally repelled. Then there happened to me that to which the rest of the day's fighting seemed only preliminary.

When we fell back slowly, I saw our second lieutenant, Christopher Gilbert, stagger and fall crookedly forward. I thought he was killed, but as I looked for a moment I noted him trying to rise. It wouldn't do to leave him there—that was certain death. Robley D. Stout, one of my company, and I ran to him, and lifting him to his feet, drew his arm over our shoulders, and brought him back to the retreating line. He was shot through the leg with a grape-shot and unable to help himself more than to cling to our shoulders. I wished at the time that he were as big as a bale of hay, for his body made a sort of shield for the two youths who were carrying him away from the missiles that still pursued him spitefully as though they were bent on finishing the work they had begun.

He recovered after a tedious time in hospital, and when he could return to duty the additional bar he won at Vicksburg graced his shoulder-strap, and he was our first lieutenant.

Years afterwards, referring to this same second lieutenant, he says:

There were two Gilberts in the company, Chris and Charley, brothers, good boys and good soldiers. I met my lieutenant a few times after the war. Then our lives drifted apart. I became a minister and was pastor of Temple Baptist Church in Los Angeles, California.

One day my lieutenant came before me, not to give orders, but to take them. He was a prisoner, and his fair captor stood beside him. She had done what Pemberton's sharpshooters in Vicksburg could not do. Love had won my lieutenant. I ordered him to accept the terms of the bride, to "love her, comfort her, cherish her, honor and keep her, till death them did part." And he obeyed willingly.

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After the service he said:

"Bob, do you recall the hot afternoon on the slopes before the bastion at Vicksburg?"

"I was just thinking of it, Lieutenant. And I was wondering if now you might ever blame me for helping to drag you out of the range of Pemberton's sharpshooters?"

"Indeed, no," he said, "I never will. I've often wondered why the dear Lord sent you back after me. But this is the 'Why'."

Such experiences as these burned into his soul an appreciation and admiration for the flag, which inspired his pen to flame forth these words:

Every time Honor writes a new battle name in gold on the flag she blots the names of a few men off the regimental roll, in blood. That's the price of the battle inscriptions. That's what makes them so precious. The inscriptions are laid on in gold, underlaid and made indelible with blood. No wonder the Flag seems to be a thing of life. Every fold in it is a-quiver with human hearts. When it is fluttering in the wind, it is throbbing. When it is unfurled in the rain, it weeps. The Flag—that is the Heart of the Regiment.

And that it may never grow weak with the years and service, in every battle new hearts, young and brave and loyal, are transfused into the quivering veins of red and white; into the stars of gold on the field of blue. It is the living history of the regiment. It is the roster of the heroic dead, woven into the story of its many conflicts. It is memory and inspiration. It is the visible soul of a cause. So the men of the Union looked upon "Old Glory". So the men of the Confederacy gazed upon the "Stars and Bars" in the days of its hopes, when it flamed above fighting legions of the South.

The 47th, his regiment, was one of four, which, with the 2d Iowa Battery, composed what is known as the "Eagle Brigade", from the fact that the 8th Wisconsin Regiment of that Brigade carried a young American eagle all through the war. All of the boys were proud

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of that eagle. While waiting for his discharge at Selma in 1865, he wrote his brother John:

Obliged to you for the picture of the eagle. I tried to get one to send to you at La Grange, but couldn't. His head wasn't near as white then as now. You needn't give your promised history of the eagle. The 8th Wis. has been in our brigade nearly three years, and the Johnnies knew us as the Eagle Brigade. I have fed "old Abe" with chicken and once got well bit for teasing him. I saw him at Jackson; he was always carried on that shield by a sergeant right with the colors, and he is fastened by a piece of long twine. At Vicksburg, too, old Abe charged with us; mingling his shrill defiant scream, with the cheers of the men who thought more of him next to "old Joe" than anything else in the Brigade.

Old Abe knew our partiality for him and many a time have we toiled and sweated and raced after a rabbit merely to give it to old Abe and see him kill it and pick out the good parts, for he was a dainty old feeder; we shared so many chickens and other good contraband grub with him, that if you didn't happen to give him just what suited his palate there was a row. He had a few feathers carried away by a minie ball at Corinth, and has been in every fight with his regiment. His head was not white when he went home on veteran furlough, but it was when he came back on a visit to us at Memphis, and he looked very much like the photograph.

And fifty years after the war he wrote:

He was an eaglet when the war broke out, and enlisted young, like many of the boys who loved him and fought beside him. He was captured on the Flambeau River, Wisconsin, in 1861, by a Chippewa Indian, "Chief Sky", who sold him for a bushel of corn. Subsequently a Mr. Mills paid five dollars for him, and presented him to "C" Company of the Eighth Wisconsin Regiment, known as the "Eau Claire Eagles". The soldiers at once adopted him as one of their standards, made him a member of the color-guard, named him in honor of the greatest of the presidents, and he never once disgraced his name. Through thirty-six battles he screamed his "Ha, ha" among the trumpets, smelling the battle afar off, fluttering among the

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thunder of the captains and the shouting. Never once did he flinch. He was wounded in the assault on Vicksburg and in the battle of Corinth.

Dear "Old Abe"! I think of him every time I look at a quarter. His portrait makes it big as a dollar. I often wish all my creditors had belonged to the "Eagle Brigade". You see, patriotism not only makes a man's country seem greater; it makes her coinage appear more precious.

In describing the attitude of some of the unreconstructed Rebel soldiers, he wrote from Selma on May 26, 1865:

One of them so far relied on my magnanimity as to inform me that in addition to being a "nigger" worshipper, abolitioner, etc., I was a d—— Lincolnite and that there would be more of us go the same way our President (the "baboon" he called him) had. He hasn't relied any on my magnanimity since, nor on any other Yankee's, I don't think, and won't till he gets out of the hospital, for I lifted a piece of board off his head several times, and he is now somewhat indisposed, but very quiet and civil.

Courageously enough he did his duty through the three years of his enlistment, and yet he hated war and never had anything but condemnation for the spirit that made war necessary. He attacked it always with all the power of his eloquence as the—

destruction of innocent and useful things, the destruction of everything. When we tore up a railway, it wasn't enough to demolish it so that trains could not go over it. We burned the ties. But we made them destroyers of other things in their own fiery death.

We builded orderly heaps of them—because war does not destroy like a blind storm that does not know how to destroy property—war destroys scientifically. On top of the ties we laid the iron rails. The heat of the fire furnaced the rails to red-whiteness, and their own weight compelled them to suicide. They bent down in strangling humiliation. Or, if there was

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time, fifteen or twenty minutes longer, men seized the ends of the rails with improvised tongs of twisted saplings, ran the red center of the rail against a tree, and bent it around the oak in a glowing knot. The enemy could make a new rail in less time than he could straighten out that entanglement.

He no doubt obeyed orders and “aimed to kill”—but of this he seldom spoke or wrote. Once in a letter he wrote:

I have served eighteen months as an infantryman and a similar period of cavalry arms, participating in twenty-two battles and skirmishes, never having been shot and devoutly hoping that I killed and wounded the same number of the enemy as they have of me. Anyway, I tried to put down the rebellion with a musket larger than myself.

This truant verse written by him is characteristic:

Sweet little Major, he mounts my knee,
And the tender blue eyes look at me.
“Tell me, Popsie, just once more,
What did you do when you went to war?”

And then I tell of the autumn day
When the Forty-seventh marched away;
How Cromwell died at Jackson town,
And Miles on Corinth field went down.

“But how many rebels, tell me true,
Did you kill then, and the whole war through?”
And I tell him then, with eager zest,
How Jo Reed blew up a limber chest.

But the Major sticks to his question still,
“How many rebels did you kill?”
So I tell him how, near the set of sun,
The charge was made and the battle won.

And how, the day McClure was shot
When Vicksburg’s fight was fierce and hot,
Brave Sam Law took C company in
Through flame and smoke and the batteries’ din;

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How over our heads the battle broke,
With screaming shell and saber stroke,
And he wanted to know, the little elf,
“But how many men did you kill yourself?”

“Say, tell me, Popsie, say you will—
How many rebels did you kill?”
So I told him the truth, as near as might be—
As many of them as they did of me.

The editor of *Bugle Echoes*, in a story of Illinois 47th, referring to Mr. Burdette, says:

In the excitement of battle man's inner nature is apt to show forth. A preacher may become profane and a pirate pray. Look into the mild, laughing brown eyes of America's sweetest humorist, read the tender sonnets from his pen or listen to the loving pleadings from his pulpit and imagine, if you can, Robert J. Burdette a tiger in action.

Yet so he was, every crack of his rifle a joy, his face illumined; battle was an inspiration and his wit never so nimble as then. One forgets what is said in such an hour. Action leaves only impressions; one remembers fierce imprecations, but not the words; he is conscious of shouts, but knows not wherefore; he laughs at something said, but he forgets what it was. The boys of Company B laughed often with gentle Robert, but laughed loudest upon the battle line.”

He enlisted as a private, and as a private he was discharged at the close of the war. At banquet tables in many after years he sat with distinguished persons of many ranks, titles, and degrees, and to the toast masters, after calling upon Generals, Colonels, and Ambassadors to respond, there was always a sly humor in their calling upon “Private Bob Burdette”. But as a private he groomed his horse so perfectly, attended to camp duties so efficiently, performed the details of orderly so courageously, he won the commendation and admiration of ranking officers.

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An incident he often related was his first personal meeting with Grant. A box of good things from home, the only one, he says, that ever reached him during the War, was the means of introducing him to his Commanding General. His regiment was in camp at Young's Point, La., employed in digging the famous canal designed to carry the fleet around Vicksburg in that campaign. A man of his company came up from the river one day and said, "There is a box addressed to you down on one of the steamboats."

With a pass to the river and an order for his box, he was on his way in an instant, presenting his order to a civilian commissioner on the boat, only to be informed that all the stores on the transport, private and public, were the property of the Sanitary Commission, having been seized for use in the hospitals. Having failed in various appeals, the boy suggested there might be letters in the box—might he not open it and get them? His account of what followed is characteristic:

The big Irish mate followed me to the gangplank.

"Ye'll get yer box, me lad," he said, "if ye do as I tell ye. Go up on the cabin deck an' ask the Ould Man."

Who was the Old Man?

"Ould Grant, no less. He kem aboard about an hour ago, an' he's up there smokin' this minute whin I kem down. I'll pass ye the gyard and ye'll go on up. Come an' wid ye."

He led me up to the cabin deck. There sat the silent, brown-bearded man whose features every soldier knew and whose greatness every western soldier held in unquestioning reverence. I saluted, the mate explained my errand, and the general looked out over the turbid Mississippi and smoked silently while I pleaded my little case. Then he asked for my order. My heart beat high with the hope that he would write a military O.K. across it with magic initials. To my amazement, he read it and rose to his feet. "Come with me," he

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said. And a bewildered private soldier, escorted by the General Commanding the Military Division of the Mississippi, followed him to the civilian commissioner.

I pointed out my property, and General Grant handed the order to the civilian. "Give the boy his box," he said simply. The commissioner bowed and I saluted. I wish I could imitate that salute now. It was a combination of reverence, admiration, kowtow and renewed assurance of a distinguished consideration. Except possibly in China, the general never again received such an all-comprehensive obeisance.

The cigar between the fingers swept a half-circle of smoke as the Commander, with military punctiliousness, returned the private's salute, and with a half-smile playing under the brown mustache, created, I fear, by that all-comprehensive, unprecedented salute of mine, he returned to his chair on the cabin deck, while the big mate patted my back all the way to the gangplank.

Years later he wrote:

I am not the original Grant man. I was always an honest admirer of Grant's, for I felt and learned in the long Jackson and Vicksburg campaigns the intense devotion to him which inspired every man who ever served under him, and the feeling never left me, never grew weak or faint. But I did not think it wise or right that he should be called back to Washington for a third term, and I was not a Grant man in that sense, last spring. I was a Blaine man.

Now look back five or six weeks, and see what one man towers above all others in this fight. Never seemed the man Grant so great before. His simple, unquestioning, unselfish patriotism, the grandeur with which he rose superior to every personal question, and unified the sentiment and closed up the ranks of the Republican party by the magnetism of his presence, the straightforward common sense of his short speeches, and the splendid patriotism of his example, commanded and won the admiration, the confidence, the good will of the Republican party to a more universal degree than he ever before possessed it.

The first soldier of our time, the peerless captain who never knew defeat, yet the citizen Grant is greater even than the general, and the people see it and feel it to be so. There is in

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all our land, I think, no man who stands so high, and withal so modest, so unambitious for himself—I do not believe he is touched with any personal ambition—so unselfishly devoted to his country.

And later yet he wrote:

Often as I journey to New York, I have time to go out to the stately mausoleum on Riverside Drive, bearing over its portals the message of the great captain to the warring world—“Let us have peace.” I stand uncovered as I look at the sarcophagus that holds his dust. I think of his greatness and of his simplicity. The courage of the soldier, the rare abilities of the general, and the gentleness of the man. I see him going with a private soldier, and hear him, in the voice that could have moved armies of half a million men, issuing the quiet command that gave to a boy a little box of things from mother. And that picture harmonizes perfectly with all the others.

The tomb of Grant will always be a monument to the preaching of peace by the silent soldier—the greatest of American soldiers, who never failed in accomplishing the thing he set out to do—“who never overrated himself in his dispatches, who never underrated himself in battle.” Grant, whose gentleness was equal to his courage, and whose magnanimity equaled his justice. The strongest, bravest, greatest, sweetest soldier!

With his old colonel, J. D. McClure of Peoria, he maintained an ardent friendship and occasional correspondence until the death of Colonel McClure. Of him he wrote:

Of all the colonels under whom I served, Colonel John D. McClure was my ideal. A man with a strong figure and a strong face, a man’s voice, deep and commanding; clear, steady eyes.

For each and all who companioned him during those crucial years he held a reverent memory:

You can’t define “friend” in dictionary terms [he wrote]. And “comrade”—that isn’t a name; that’s a man. Tried by

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the acid test like pure gold, tried by the fire test; by the wet fleece and the dry; by long marches; by hunger and thirst; by the long line of gleaming bayonets; by the thunder of the big guns; by the fierce reaping hooks of flame; by pain and wounds; by the fierce grip of battle; danger and death. That's what a Grand Army man or a Confederate Veteran means when he says "comrade". How are you going to put all that into a dictionary definition?

In later life, when referring to one old comrade, he wrote:

Had we, then, forgotten him so quickly? Forget the comrade who had shared our duties, our privations, our hardships, our perils? It was nearly fifty years ago that we fired our "farewell shot" over that grave, and a little ache creeps into my heart with the thought of him today.

It isn't a good thing for a soldier, who every day must face death in some measure, to be depressed in spirit. It unfits him for his duties. The trilling fifes and the merry drums are not to make us forget. They are to remind us that we must be ready for every duty, cheery and brave and faithful. The music of the camp never dims the memory of the comrade who has been called to higher duty. It's the way of the camp, and of the busy world, and it's a good way. I do not believe in wearing mourning for the dead, yet no man loves his friends more dearly than I. I would not say of my loved ones, when they pass on to the perfect life, "They make me gloomy every time I think of them. As a token of my feelings toward them, I darken my sunshine with these sable garments of the night."

The drums and the bugles were as companions to the spirited boy, who never ceased to be moved by martial music:

One of our drummers—the youngest—was a tonic for a faint heart. Johnny Grove; he could drum to beat a hail-storm on a tin roof, and he had a heart full of merriment and a tongue as ready as a firecracker. Death came very near to him many times, but he always laughed when he heard the boy,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

and passed on, and Johnny still lived with a heart as mellow as then it was light, until a few years ago.

The drums of the Forty-seventh—they time a quicker throb to my old heart now, when I think I hear them again, on a rough road and a steep grade. The drummers are old men; old as myself. And again they are playing the regiment into camp. The fifes blow softly as flutes. The roll of the muffled drums, tender as the patter of rain on autumn leaves, times the slow steps of old soldiers with the Dead March to which we listened so oft when life was in the springtime:

There's nae sorrow there, John;
There's neither cauld nor care, John,
The day is aye fair
I' the Land o' the Leal.

But the bugles! Their voices never change. I have heard them in the midst of the storm of war on a blood-drenched battle-field come ringing down the broken lines, breaking through the pungent powder smoke, their voices of command clear as the song of a meadow lark calling through a bank of fog or a cloud of drifting mist. Strangely sweet, the bugle call in the midst of the battle clamor—the roar of the guns, the fierce rattle of musketry, “the thunder of the captains and the shouting.” Heart-breakingly sweet. The soldier starts sometimes as though he heard the echo of his mother’s voice calling him out of the passion of carnage, calling him back to her side—back to her arms, back to her tender caresses, soothing the storm of battle rage in his young heart—calling him to home and peace, with the old love songs, the cooing dove and the whistling robin.

Then the bugle, sweetly as ever, calls yet more insistently, and a great thundering shout from the colonel drowns the mother-voice—“Fix bayonets! Forward—guide center—double quick—follow me, boys!” And the wave of the charge carries the line forward on a billow of cheers in a tempest of fighting madness. And still the bugle calls, just as sweetly and just as insistently as though a beautiful queen were urging her soldiers on to glory and victory—Deborah singing “The Charge.”

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How can anything so beautiful set a man on to fight and kill? Well, it does. A soldier in a fatigue uniform looks like a dude alongside of a civilian in his fishing clothes. There is good music in the beer halls; better, sometimes, than you can hear in your home church. A regiment marching down street behind its military band Sunday morning is far more alluring in appearance than the throngs of worshippers straggling along to worship. Why is a battleship more attractive than a ferryboat?

Mr. Burdette loved the people of the South and they loved him. How could it be otherwise? His forebears dwelt there. There his grandfather lived with his slaves, which he had freed, however, before the war. There his aunts and uncles and cousins live today. Writing of the Southland as he first saw it, he said:

Such a beautiful country we were marching through, that summer day. A park for loveliness; a granary for fertility. Low hills whose wooded crests smiled on the cornfields that ran down to the emerald meadows. A creek meandering across the plantations, loitering in its broad and shallow bends to photograph the white clouds posing against the soft turquoise skies; stately old plantation homes with their colonial architecture; the little villages of negro quarters in the rear; pleasant orchards and fragrant gardens.

How beautiful they were, those sweet old southern homes! And dear and fair some of them still stand, here and there in the new South, amid the rush and clatter of modernity and progress, of steam and electricity, gasoline, automobiles and airships, tourists and promoters and prospectors, iron furnaces and coal mines. Not as scolding protests against progress, development and prosperity—they are too gentle for that. They stand rather as beautiful memories of all that was sweetest and fairest and best in the Old South. What colonial grace in their white-columned verandas. What stateliness in the heavy cornice; what welcome of hospitality in the spacious doors with their old-time “side-lights,” and in the sunny smiles of the many-windowed front. The shadow of pathos

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rests upon them now, tenderly as the sun-kissed haze of Indian summer days. They temper our nervous desire for "newness"; they correct our taste for architectural frenzies of many-gabled deformities and varicolored creosote "complexions". They are of the old order, which, like the Old Guard, dies, but never surrenders to modern changes. They stood here before the war. They have been deluged with woe. They have been baptized in sorrows, the bitterness and depth of which our northern homes never knew—can not know—please God, never will know.

And some of their anguish has been the common sorrows of all homes in war times—the heartache of bereaved motherhood; the agony of widowhood; the loneliness of the orphaned. The loving Father of us all has made the sorrow that is common a healing balm that makes holy and tender the bitterness of the cruel past. The kisses that rained on the faces of the dead have blossomed into the perfumed lilies of consolation for the living.

He never failed to express his belief in the entire justice of the cause for which the war was fought by the North. At a banquet in Los Angeles, almost fifty years after the close of the war, he took quick and eloquent issue with one of the speakers of the occasion who had finished an unusual eulogy of Robert E. Lee. It was never his disposition, even for courtesy's sake, to sit by when he felt that eloquence was far out-stripping truth. Springing to his feet at the close of the eulogy, and with an intense earnestness and rapidity of speech, he said:

I do not believe that Robert E. Lee was "one greater than Washington." And I do not think that the supreme agony of the Son of God in the infinite anguish of the trial of Gethsemane should be mentioned in the same sentence, much less compared with, the distress in the mind of a Colonel of a United States Infantry regiment, deliberating on his decision to break his sword and his allegiance to the government which he had sworn to defend against all foreign and domestic foes. For, stripped

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of all beauty of eulogy and verbiage of rhetoric, that is what Robert E. Lee did. The weak point in his character was his exaggerated state loyalty. It was his making the state of Virginia greater than the United States—the part greater than the whole—an impossibility in mathematics or politics.

There is an indescribable pathos in the tragedy of Lee's life. Almost on the night of which this is the anniversary—October 16, 1859—John Brown, in a rebellious uprising against the United States government, captured the little town of Harper's Ferry. Colonel Robert E. Lee and his regiment were sent to suppress the rebellion. He did it in true soldierly manner. On the second of December John Brown was hanged for treason. No one—not even his best friends—questioned the righteousness of the sentence, the justice of the execution. Could some mighty hand have drawn aside the curtain of the future on that day, it would have revealed to Robert E. Lee, only six short years from that time, himself and John Brown in changed relations. He, in a strange uniform, under a strange flag, hostile to the United States, laying down his sword and surrendering himself to the mercy of the United States Government; surrendering to troops wearing his old uniform, phalanxed under the flag which his old regiment carried at the execution of Ossewattamie Brown. He would have seen himself standing at the steps of the scaffold, saved by the gentleness of the kindest government on earth.

In his letter to General Scott, tendering his resignation, Colonel Lee wrote, "Save in defense of my native state, I never desire again to draw my sword." He broke this pledge when, in 1862, he invaded with his armies, the State of Pennsylvania, a sovereign state, even as was Virginia. From that fatal 3d of July at Gettysburg, Lee's star began to decline. He was never again "the invincible Lee". He made a stand here, a stand there. He never again made a successful advance against the Union troops. He fought like the soldier he was, splendidly—magnificently. But hairsbreadth by hairsbreadth, inch by inch, he was forced back to Appomattox. On the 9th of April, 1865, John Brown was dead; the slaves were free; Lee had surrendered.

For the beauty and purity of Robert E. Lee's personal

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character I have the profoundest reverence. And for his rare soldierly qualities, for his towering abilities in camp and field, for the superb manhood of his life, for the splendid fortitude with which he met reverse and defeat, for all that was truly great in the life and character of the man, I stand with uncovered reverence before his memory. But I cannot ascribe to him the greatness of absolute perfection and universal supremacy over all men which has been so lovingly accorded him by the Virginian who is his eloquent eulogist tonight.

Life in the army furnished him a curriculum with text books from nature and experience, with daily observations on philosophy, psychology, the logic of events and human values, that later gave him the degree of past master in the understanding of all that pertained to human and spiritual life. He himself said:

There's a heap of things you learn in the army—and in civil life—that are not in the book, and nobody can teach them so well as the other soldier.

The particularly characteristic letter reproduced in facsimile on the following pages shows the reflective and reverent spirit he carried through all the varied instructions of this "open-air college" life.

His graduation thesis from this college of human experience might be said to have been written years afterward, and reflects not only the experiences those years brought him, but the deep earnestness of spirit of all the following years which so glorified all his life:

Silence, and the darkness before the dawn. Across the meadows, through fields of trampled grain, and far down the aisles of the forest, the stacked muskets mark the multiplied lines of the bivouac, broken here and there by the dark squares where the batteries are parked. Along all the lines the camp fires smoulder in their ashes. Across the velvet blackness of the sky the starry battalions march in the stately order of a million years—squadrons of the glory of God.

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"Soldiers Rest," Springfield, Ill.
Tuesday Aug 1st 1865

Dear Father

Back at last after a weary pilgrimage of three years, to the spot where I first donned the army blue. In the scenes of my halcyon Army days when, an awkward untried recruit, I imagined that the rebellion tottered when the first news of my enlistment reached their line.

Thanks be to God, I am back thos near home again; through three long years of constant peril, He has led me safely; I have faced death on the field of battle, where it seemed I could almost see the death angel as he swept down the sacred lines and breathed in the face of his

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Victims to the right and left of me, but
the God of Battles has ever been my
shield, and I am nearly home again
unscathed or marked. In camp
on the march and around the
bivouac the same powerful and
all merciful hand has sheltered
me. Pen nor tongue can express
what my heart feels.

I am in company with some 60
others (men) were mustered out
at Selma on the 20th by Lt.
Law and left for Meridian on the 21st.
Skel Ford did not come. He preferred
waiting until Aug. 20th. We are now
waiting for pay and will have to
remain here for several days maybe
a week. Davidson's Battery leaves for
Peoria this afternoon.

We are getting decidedly shabby
treatment here. Slept on the side
walk last night. The Soldiers Rest
is the nastiest place I ever was in.
I had my traps in there last night.

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and then had to evacuate, and my knapsack is used as Barracks by German of all description although I have been trying to induce them to move quarters all day. Every meal we get here is charged to us the grub is poor and the attendants mean and unaccommodating. The building is fairly filled with Germans, and if there was any place else to go to I wouldnt eat there.

The patriotic citizens of S. board soldiers at a dollar and a quarter per diem, if they furnish their own bedding and sleep on the floor. \$1.00 per diem for day boarders. At Selma good board and lodging could be had for \$5.00 per week. Compare Ills. and Alabama. They wont let a man near at Soldier Home now. I never was in one yet. Tried to get my supper at Columbus Ky but was drove away and have been disgusted with

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ever since we got here last night.

As I am a citizen, if you
answer address R. J. B. Springfield
Bengham Co. ILLS.

I dislike waiting here
very much as we were dis-
charged in full on the 20th.
so all our pay and emoluments
cease from that date. I am in
good health but my eyes are a little
poor.

I shall let you know when
^{we are} ~~are~~ coming
home. To all good bye.

Your aff son

Robt. J. Burdett
Citizen

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Now and then, as a bearded veteran might lightly and smilingly touch the shoulder of a little child, playing at war, proud of his toy gun and paper epaulette, a great star that has flamed the splendor of the Almighty since time began, touches with a flash of golden light the bayonet of a sentinel, guarding the slumbers of his wearied comrades. Tired as the weariest of them, his own eyes burn and his body aches for sleep, but Honor on his right side and Fidelity on his left, wind their mighty arms about him and keep pace with his steady step as he walks his beat. He is but a man, and he may go mad from sleeplessness; but he is a soldier, and he will not sleep. The morning darkness deepens. It gathers the sleeping army into its silent shadows as though to smother it in gloom.

Into the silence and the night, as a star falling into an abyss, clear, shrill, cheery, insistent, a single bugle sings, like a glad prophecy of morning and light and life, the rippling notes of the reveille. Like an electric thrill the laughing ecstasy runs through all the sleeping, slumbering ranks. A score of regiments catch up the refrain, and all the bugles—infantry, battery and flanking troopers—carol the symphony to the morning. Shouting and crowing soldiers swell the chorus with polyphonic augmentation; the shrill tenors of neighing chargers answer the “sounding of the trumpets, the thunder of the captains and the shouting”.

From all the corrals of the baggage and ammunition trains, the much-derided mule, equally important and essential in the success of the campaign as his aristocratic half-brother, raises his staccato baritone in antiphonal response. The camp, that a moment since lay in such stillness as wrapped the ranks of Sennacherib when the Death Angel breathed on the face of the sleeper, is awake.

And if one closed his eyes to shut out the gleaming bayonets and the stacked muskets, and the guns, silent and grim, muzzled by their black tompons, and only listened, he might think he was in the midst of a mob of joyous, care-free, happy schoolboys out on a vacation lark. For a soldier is a man with a boy's heart. The heart of the morning on the march sings in the notes of the reveille—joyous, free, exultant; it is the very ecstasy of life; the thrill of strength; the glad sense of fearlessness and confidence; a champion's desire to match his strength

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against the courage and prowess of a man worth while. On every camp of true-hearted soldiers rises "the sun of Austerlitz."

At noon straight over the earth hangs the great blazing sun, as though he poised in his onward flight for just a second, to say, "I want to see the very beginning of it." He flames down on the long trail of yellow dust that stifles the marching columns. The songs are hushed, for the feet are tired and the throats are parched. The fours are straggled across the roads, as the files find the easiest path for the route step.

Conversation is monosyllabic. A soldier barks out a jest with a sting in it, and catches a snarl in response. A tired man, with a face growing white under the bronze, shakes his canteen at his ear, and decides that he isn't thirsty enough yet.

A trooper comes galloping from the front with the official envelope sheathed underneath his belt, and is joyously sung and shouted on his way along the rough edges of the road by the sarcastic infantrymen, momentarily grateful for the diversion of his appearance—a human target against which all their shafts of wit and taunt can be launched, with the envy of the soldier with two legs in his hereditary jousting with the one who glories in six.

The trooper is gone. "The tumult and the shouting dies." Again the long, winding road; the yellow dust; the hills, the blazing sun; the cloudless sky; the tired men; the silent impatience over the step that has been quickened apparently without orders; the long stretch of marching since the last rest; an occasional order barked by a line officer, to correct the too-disordered formation; over all, the hot stillness of noon. The morning breezes died long ago. The air is dead. The leaves on the forest trees that line the road swooned with the prayer for rain in their last faint whisper to the dying zephyr that kissed them in its passing. The dust of mortality covers their brave greenery—the same yellow dust that veils the phantom army marching past.

So far away—away in the advance, and far on another road—so faint and dull that it scarcely seems to be a sound but rather a sensation that runs past the unguarded portal of the ear to touch the brain—the echo of a dream—Boom!

Yet it is deadly clear; fearfully near. Every listless head in the weary ranks is lifted. Questioning eyes answer each

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other. Every soldier has read the message, shouted so far away by a tongue of flame between black lips. Unconsciously the marching ranks are locked. Instinctively the step is quickened. The man with the whitening face drains his canteen to the last precious drop. He is going to have strength to get to the front with the regiment. Then, if he dies, he will die in the line.

"Chuck-a-chuck!" the very battery wheels put a defiant tone in the old monotony of their rumbling. "Clippity-clippity!" another galloping trooper goes down the column in a cloud of dust, but this one is garlanded with cheers, and his face lights with a grim smile. "You'll find somebody that'll make you holler when you ketch up with the cavalry!" floats over his shoulder. "It's his deal," laughs a soldier, pulling his belt a buckle-hole tighter. Tramp, tramp, tramp.

A single rifle shot. Sharp; penetrating; anger and surprise in its defiant intonation. A score of excited echoes clattering after it from hill and forest. A thrill of nervous tension runs through the column that closes the ranks in orderly formation. Quick, terse orders. Absolute discipline in every movement. The crooked rail fences on either side the road are leveled as by magic as the hands of the men touch them. The column double-quicks out of the road to right and left. Curtaining woods swallow it.

The men drop on their faces. They are lost from sight. The skirmishers, deploying as they run, swarm down the hill slope to the front like a nest of angry hornets. A handful of shots thrown into the air. They have found the pickets. A fitful rain of skirmish firing; a shot here; a half dozen; a score; silence; another half dozen shots; a cheer and a volley; far away; ringing in clear and close; drifting away almost out of hearing; off to the right; swinging back to the left; coming in nearer; more of them, gathering in numbers and increasing in their intensity; batteries feeling the woods; a long roll of musketry; ringing cheers; thunders of awakening field-guns on right and left.

The line leaps to its feet and rushes with fixed bayonets to meet the on-coming charge; the yellow clouds have changed to blue and gray; sheafs of fire gleaming through the trees; sickles of death gathering in the bloody harvest; yells of defiance and screams of agony; shouting of "the old-fashioned

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colonels" who ride with their men; bayonets gleaming about the smoke-grimed muzzles of the guns; fighting men swarming like locusts into the embrasures; saber and bayonet, sponge staff and rammer, lunge, thrust, cut, and crashing blow; men driven out of the embrasures and over the parapet like dogs before lions; turning again with yelp and snarl, and slashing their way back again like fighting bulldogs, holding every inch they gain; hand to throat and knife to heart; hurrying reinforcements from all sides racing to the crater of smoke and flame; a long wild cheer, swelling in fierce exultant cadences, over and over and over the reversed guns, like the hounds of Acteon, baying at the heels and rending the bodies of the masters for whom but late they fought.

A white flag fluttering like a frightened dove amidst the smoke and flame, the fury and anguish, the hate and terror, the madness and death of the hell of passion raging over the sodden earth—the fort is ours. *Io Triumphe!*

Count the dead. Number the hearthstones, whereon the flickering home-light, golden with children's fancies and women's dreams, have been quenched in agony, heartache and blood. Take census of the widows and orphans. Measure the yards of crepe. Gauge the bitter vintage of tears. Yes. They have more than we have. It is our fort.

We won it fairly. We are the best killers. Man to man, we can kill more of them than they can of us. That establishes the righteousness of any cause.

The night after the battle isn't so still as the night before. The soldiers are so wearied, mind and body and soul so tired, they moan a little in their sleep. A man babbles—in a strange tongue. He was the first man in the embrasure, and he is hurt in the head. He will die before morning. He is talking to his mother, who died in a little Italian mountain village when the soldier was a tiny boy—talking to her in the soft, musical tongue she taught him. He hasn't spoken a word of it for many years. But he is going out of this world of misunderstandings and strife and wars, into the unmeasured years of peace. Going to God—by the way of the old home—up the winding mountain path, past the cool spring in the shadow of the great rock, through the door of the little home under the trees—such a sweet way to heaven.

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He is soothing the deadly pain in his head, just as he soothed all his headaches and heartaches twenty years ago, by nestling in her caressing arms and leaning his tired head against her tender breast. No; he doesn't need the chaplain. His mother is comforting him. When a man gets to his mother, it isn't very far, then, to God.

A colonel sits by a camp fire with his face in his hands. The sentinel hears him say, "O, Christ!" His son was killed at his side, on the slope of the fort. The colonel has been trying to write the boy's mother. But that is harder, a thousand times harder, than fighting in the death-packed embrasures. The torn sheets of paper lying like great snowflakes about his feet are the letters he has begun. "My precious wife," "Heart of my heart," "My own heart's darling,"

It's a big price to pay for a dirt fort.

There is a saying that "All's fair in war." But the truth is, nothing is fair in war. The winner has to pay for his winnings about as much as the loser pays for his losses. And the trouble is, neither one can pay spot cash, and have the transaction over and done with. The paying for a fort goes on so long as a winner or loser is left alive—heartache and loneliness and longing and poverty and yearning and bitterness. Takes a long, long time to pay for a common dirt fort, fairly won by fair fighting.

And then, after you've won it, and have been paying for it so many years, you haven't got it, after all.

Years after the battle, a journey carried me back to the field that was ploughed into blood-sodden furrows by the iron shares of war's fierce husbandry. And one evening in May I walked, with my wife by my side, out of the little town to show her the fort whose name and story I had seen written in blood and fire and smoke. I had often told her that I could find the place if I were stone blind. I knew my way now. This direction from the little river—so far from the hill—this way from the stone mill. This is the sloping field, sure enough. I remember how my heart pumped itself well-nigh to bursting as I ran up the grade, shouting with the scanty breath I needed for running. And here, at the crest of the slope, was that whirlwind of flame and thunder, the Fort. Here—under our feet.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

The sun was going down and all the west was ruby and amethyst set in a clasp of gold. A red bird was singing a vesper song that throbbed with love-notes. In the door of the cottage, garlanded with vines, a woman was lifting her happy, laughing face to the lips of a man who, with his coat flung over his arm, had just come in from afield. And in merry circles, and bewildering mazes, over the velvet grasses and the perfumed violets that carpeted the sweet earth where the Fort should have stood, a group of romping children laughed and danced and ran in ever-changing plays, and all the world around that old hell-crater was so sweet and happy with peace and love and tenderness that the heart had to cry because laughter wasn't happy enough to speak its joy and gratitude. I held the hand of my dear wife close against my heart as she nestled a little nearer to my side, and I thanked God that I couldn't find the fort I helped to win.

It was built to resist plunging solid shot and bursting shell and treacherous mine; the storm of shouting columns and the patient strategy and diligence of engineer and sapper. But God—God the all-loving Father, scattered the soft white flakes of snow—lighter than drifting down upon it, for a few winters. For a few summers he showered upon it from the drifting clouds light raindrops no bigger than a woman's tears. He let the wandering winds blow gently over it. The sheep grazed upon its slopes. The little children romped and played over it. The clinging vines picked at it with their tiny fingers. And lo! while the soldier's memory yet held the day of its might and strength and terror, it was gone.

"Then the same day at evening"—the evening of the first Sunday; only three days after the agony of Gethsemane; the terror of Olivet, the storm of hate and bigotry on Calvary, the blood and sacrifice, the awful tragedy of the cross, the splendor of the resurrection—"came Jesus and stood in the midst and saith unto them, 'Peace be unto you.'"

And the horror and the fear and the anguish were gone. "Then were the Disciples glad." They knew His face by the peace that shone upon it. The benediction of His lips rested on their souls. "Peace." And the storm was over.

Today, we climb the hill outside the gates of the city, and we cannot find the holy spot whereon they crucified Him. We

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know the storm of warring human passions, of anger and bigotry and ignorance that raged around His cross. But we cannot find the spot where it stood. For all the green hill is beautiful in the blessed tranquility of the peace that endures. For love is sweeter than life, and stronger than death, and longer than hate.

The hand of the conqueror and the hand of the vanquished fit into each other in the perfect clasp of friendship. The flag that waved in triumph and the flag that went down in defeat cross their silken folds in graceful emblem of restored brotherhood. The gleaming ploughshare turns the brown furrow over the crumbling guns that ploughed the field of life with death. God's hand has smoothed away slope and parapet of the Fort that was won for an hour and lost forever.

CHAPTER III

FINDING HIMSELF

AFTER he made his way back from Corinth to Peoria, and was welcomed to the home that had watched for him, prayed for him, was proud of him, he wrote:

And my mother, her brown hair silvered with the days of my soldiering, held me in her arms and counted the years of her longing and watching with kisses. When she lifted her dear face I saw the story of my marches and battles written there in lines of anguish. If a mother should write her story of the war, she would pluck a white hair from her temple, and dip the living stylus into the chalice of her tears, to write the diary of the days upon her heart.

Out of these years of activity and dramatic interest, his bubbling nature, as well as necessity, demanded employment, and he sought it in various lines. On one of his frequent visits to his grandfather in Cincinnati in August of 1866, his mother wrote in a letter which he treasured through all the years:

I do wish you could have made up your mind to have taught. You could easily have got a school, and you would have had so much time to have read medicine too. They offer from \$50.00 to \$60.00 in the country schools. That would have kept you nicely and put some by. Mary commences next Monday week. She has had several applications from young ladies, and I think she will have a good school. John gets along about as usual; folds papers a while, goes out and rests a week or two, and then goes back to it again with renewed vigor.

And adds as a postscript to this letter:

FINDING HIMSELF

Uncle I. has got the Post Office. Do not know when he takes possession. I expect he could get you a school if you would like to come home.

This evidences the intense longing of the mother heart to be helpful, and to keep her boy as near her as possible, as well as the fact that they had had many a council as to what he should do. Again in October a letter was sent to him in Cincinnati from a Mr. Cousins, seemingly a neighbor, which shows that he was still seeking employment:

I do really hope that you will be successful in getting into something that will rejoice your heart, and make your purse stand out with greenbacks. At the same time it will please me very much to see you back here again.

This letter is interlined in red ink after a characteristic fashion by young Burdette, making a running commentary in his whimsical style on every paragraph.

The holidays found him at home again, and a receipt signed by him December 29th indicates he was soliciting subscriptions for the Peoria *Weekly Transcript*. Yielding to his mother's persuasions to teach, he was granted December 31, 1866, a Teacher's Certificate, Second Grade, signed by Peoria County Superintendent of Schools, N. E. Worthington, after a satisfactory examination in "Orthography, reading in English, Arithmetic, English Grammar, Modern Geography and the History of the United States." This gained him a position in a school sixteen miles from Peoria, and a letter dated March 16th, 1867, bears the heading "Burdette Academy, near the City of Trivoli," and carries the information that "father is now a gentleman of leisure" and that "school will close the last of March."

Another letter written from the same place runs as follows:

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

CHAP. I.

"Why do I wepe 4 the?"—SPOKESHARE.

NOTES Explanatory Marginal and Satirical.

a *Talk with half a dozen different teachers and compare their various ideas. To get the bright side of a teacher's qualities and character, talk with a scholar he has thrashed.*

b *Baseball is as essentially an American game as Cricket is English. I am surprised that it meets with so little favor among the students in the Academy.*

c *The bawl thus produced is one of the most horrible combination of sounds ever grated on mortal ear. I have heard it.*

a *Outside of the school house, throwing clubs at the door thereof.*

b *With the Osage club.*

c *In a horn!*

d *Usually on the occasion of some Base Bawl Match.*

Running an Academy is one of the best, most stirring, laziest, energetic, contemptible, beggarly, honorable, professions a man can attain to, according as he thinks.^a My own establishment goes on very smoothly. I have taken a great interest in the gymnastic recreations of the students. I have organized, even in this out-of-the-way place, two "Base Ball Clubs."^b One I have named the "Osage" and the other the "Weeping Willow." These clubs are about the thickness of a man's finger at one end and gradually taper off to a fine point. When applied to the lower portion of the anatomy of the back of some of the students, these "clubs" produce the "basest bawl"^c you ever heard. Fact! Played a match game with one of the students yesterday. "Osage" club, so called from the hedge where it was obtained, was on the ground with unusual alacrity. "Smallboy" on deck, "Professor" to the bat. Smallboy made a short lively run but was "caught out"^a neatly by the "Professor", who brought him back. Smallboy again made a spurt for the home base; Prof. "scored"^b twice over the legs. Good dodging at the short stop succeeded when Smallboy took the bat over the head. Prof. scored a few more, and the game was over, with the usual noise throughout. My connection with the Academy closes in about two weeks. As a general thing it has been very pleasant,^c but I don't think I'll "wepe" a great deal when it is through with, though they love me a few. I have several times observed some of the "scollards" in tears^d on my account.

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CHAP. II

"*Ain't I glad to get out of the wilderness?*"—BURNS.

"*The boy stood on the Burning Deck!*"—PSLAMS.

^g
Vulgarly supposed to be very early in the morning. This barbarous custom of getting up before the sun, as if the sun did not know when to start the day, is a relic of barbarism. It is true that the early bird catches the worm, but what consolation is that to the worm? Had he stayed in bed later he would not have been caught.

^a
How are the mighty fallen? Give it up? Because they can't neither of 'em climb a tree.

The custom here is to go to bed at sunset and get up some time in the night^a and eat breakfast. If by any means the family fail to retire at dusk, candles are lighted and pater familias takes a last year newspaper and reads it aloud for the amusement and edification of his hearers. Any one moving around, whispering, whistling in a soft low musical whistle, or shuffling his or her feet, is instantly withered by a piercing glance, to the entire satisfaction of the rest of the community. Personally, I am very hard to wither. Under ordinary circumstances I do not wilt worth a cent. But when I consider myself as merely one of a community, I share the awe^a which the others of the family circle feel for its august head.

Referring to this experience once, he wrote:

NEBRASKA CITY, Dec. 3, 1881.

Why, bless you, boy, I was president of the college; that is, I taught school one winter in district No. 4. "Prof" Worthington; Nic. Worthington, was county superintendent that year. And I boarded at James Morris'. Ah, talk about the present system of public schools. New stone school house; I was the first teacher. I don't know; must have been forty pupils; maybe fifty. And thirty of them were named Holt. The Holt family had a working majority on joint ballot in that district. William Henry Holt was the smallest boy in school, I think. No, Louis Green was. William Henry was as full of mischief as a shad is of bones, and too good-natured for any one to get cross at. It was a black, barren, uneventful day when that boy couldn't keep up a steady fusilade of potato popguns. Frank Ford was the smartest boy; a hard student, but of very delicate health. John—oh, I can't remember

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names—John, the biggest boy, with a pair of shoulders like a giant; best natured and best dispositioned boy in the school. I was always glad of that, for when he stood up beside me I had to lay my head back until my neck ached to look into his big honest face.

Three months' experience seemed to have satisfied him, or satisfied his pupils that his particular talents must be utilized along other lines. Jacob Topping employed him for a short time as a clerk in his crockery store "without fatality to dish or human"—as he later recorded, but while working in McBurney's house and sign painting shop an explosion of naptha seriously burned him about the face. It was here he received his first real encouragement to study art and the way was opened by natural stages, which was ultimately to follow through the rest of his career.

Early in 1868 he wrote:

I have assumed charge of the United States Railway Mail Service as junior clerk in the Peoria office and extra man for the route agent.

A letter under date of April 21st, to his aunt, reveals his attitude toward this work:

I am immersed in business, have ever so much more to do than I can stand up to, have denied myself any kind of pleasure or recreation whatever, devoting my entire time and all my talents to the Government, neglectful of friends and home, deaf to the siren voices of pleasure, blind to the allurements of the outside world, forgetful of "Evalina", who esteems me a "brute," alike regardless of calls of pleasure, fame, love, or anything else but dinner.

I am a ghost of the P. O. entombed amidst its piles of dead-letters, wandering aimlessly about amidst its bewildering mazes of "cases", pigeon holes, lock boxes, through pouches, way boxes, "tie-sacks", brass-locks, paper and "Dis" cases; devoid of feeling as the toughest mail sack in the service, it matters little to me how much or how horribly, with stamp

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whose steel is no harder than a mailing clerk's heart I mar the spotless surface of some delicate perfumed billet, or smash the "pictur" of some unhappy swain who had practiced for hours to acquire the peculiarly sweet expression of face and feature exhibited on such occasions, which my rude hand has "smollixed".

Wedding cards, sheriff's notices, duns, love letters, all pass alike through careless hands; from early morning till late at night I scatter broadcast over the land my strangely assorted messages. Sending to some homes tidings of joy unspeakable, news of some loved one long mourned as dead mayhap, tossing with the same hand a swift-footed messenger of heart-crushing woe into homes, but a moment before the happiest in the world, sending to some lonely wanderer words of cheer and encouragement from dear ones at home, white-winged messengers of love, weighted with the hopes and longings of tender hearts and true, side by side with them messages of darkest portent, words of bitter wrath and undying hatred, oh, Lum, the mystery of one hour's work of mine! If I knew everything I sent out I don't believe I or any man could do it. But "where ignorance is bliss, etc." I whistle, laugh and sing as though I were handling chips instead of —

Shortly after, under quite another temper of spirit, he wrote to this same correspondent:

Our life here is always woefully checkered. For one day of cloudless summer, we count weary weeks of changing April and drear December. From the cradle to the grave it is only a pilgrimage, not a pleasure jaunt, and sorrow and disappointment we must all look for at every step of our toilsome march. But we look beyond all these. Each night a day's journey nearer home, nearer through with earth and its storms, its chill blasts of disappointment that embitter our life, its great load of sorrows that crowd out our joys from our hearts, sorrows that sweep over our skies like dark clouds shutting us out from the glorious sunlight streaming above them. These must be endured, the cross *must* be carried, but how much lighter it is when loving hands bear up its crushing weight, and strong, tender arms support the form that faints beneath it. Sorrow we cannot escape, but when it comes 'tis naught to

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bear, if loving hearts but share it with us. But I won't preach to you any longer. I don't want to make anyone blue because I have a fit on.

Many years afterward, when interviewed concerning this service to the Federal Government, he said:

I was in the railway mail service when there really wasn't any such thing. I was a route agent, a "router" who ran a short line, and had lots to do, and few people to boss him. I ran from Peoria, Ill., to Logansport, and, my boy, those were great days. I had one end of a big car, and the baggage and the baggage agent had the other, which made it convenient for us to swap lies when there wasn't much to do. Everything would go all right in the mail line during the spring and summer, but after that came the "winter of our discontent" when farmers began to ship apples. They would be loaded on the front of the baggage car, making it very heavy and a load itself. I would have about three hundred pounds of mail, much of it in the cases all distributed. Things would go along all right until we struck the bridge three or four miles out of Logansport. The train would strike that bridge with a jolt and swing that was awful, and almost every time it would jolt all my mail in the light end of the car out of the cases and mix it up on the floor. That would break my young heart, and many a day I have cried and worked those few miles like a little boy.

Then I remember the time I had throwing papers off while the train was moving. I had a package for Red Mill when I didn't know the road very well. As I came up to the place I let the package fly. It went right through one of the mill windows, and a train of profanity followed me to the next station. Next trip I decided to throw that package off in time, so in my anxiety I threw it off a quarter of a mile too soon and saw it floating down the river back of us. I was so disgusted that when I saw a package for Cross Roads 22, I just said to myself, "I'll be blamed if I'll throw it off," and I carried it back to Peoria.

I was in Washington just after Frank Hatton was appointed postmaster-general, so I went to congratulate him. You

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know Frank and I were on the *Hawk-Eye* together. Frank said to me: "Bob, you were in the service yourself one time, weren't you?"

I confessed.

"Well, I'll show you your record."

I said I hoped to goodness he wouldn't do anything like that, but he flashed up a lot of books which showed that I had missent an awful lot of stuff, and it was still hanging over me. You see I was the only man on my run, and on the Illinois Central South they had two clerks, so when I got a good deal of mail and didn't feel well I bunched the whole thing up and sent it to the "I. C. South". There it was in Washington checked up against me. As it was all true, I couldn't say a word, but I thought it was pretty tough to hold that up against a fellow so long.

Frank thought it was a good joke. But I said to him, "Well, I'll take that, but I can tell one on you." Frank said to go ahead, and I said:

"When you were appointed postmaster-general, Frank, you sent your valet to the senate to hear all the gossip he could about what the senators said when your name was sent in for confirmation."

"Well?" said Frank.

And when he came back you asked him very eagerly what nice things the senators said, and he replied: "Oh, they just laughed." Well, Frank didn't hold any more things over my head that day.

In April he wrote to his Aunt:

Father is not well. Mother is feeble.

And this mother—who gave her life cheerfully to the bearing and caring for ten children—at the early age of forty-five, faded and passed on, June 23, 1868. Mary, the "little mother", wrote of her to her brother Rob a few weeks later:

When my longing heart cries out for the mother, who, for so many years cared for us with love so unselfish, so untiring, and taught us so many lessons of patient and unwavering

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trust in God—when I think of her and long for her with desire so intense that it seems as if she must come, and then awake to the very startling truth that she has gone from earth forever, and we must live without her year after year, involuntary sighs escape, and the tears, unbidden, start, but we sorrow not as those without hope. . . . May we not cherish the hope that our mother in the perfect life of peace and purity and blissful rest, may guide us more truly than she could have done in this world of turmoil and strife and sin. I love to think thus, and the fond hope goes very far to soften the pain of separation.

Soon after his mother's death, he left Peoria for New York to enter Cooper Institute, for the instruction the friend had encouraged him to believe would be worth the struggle.

October 31st he wrote a letter from Cincinnati to the Peoria *Transcript*, signed "Rob Burdette." After a visit in Pruntytown, his father's birthplace, and arriving in New York early in December, he wrote on the 10th his first New York letter to the Peoria *Transcript*. Having passed through Philadelphia, he wrote of it as the "checker-board town":

It is the worst place in the world for anybody that was not born there. Its long endless streets without a curve or a wrinkle through their entire length, their interminable rows of white shutters, all standing open alike and closing at the same instant with mathematical precision and undeviating regularity, the awful primness which stares you in the face from the early drab of morning to their broad-brimmed sunset, gives the stranger a kind of straight-jacket feeling.

He says of New York:

But this delightful old mixed-up place, where every avenue you take loses itself in a maze of entanglements, where the stranger, after securing full and definite instructions from a policeman who can speak English, buttons up his coat and resolutely starts out to somewhere, and after turning the first two corners as per directions, finds himself back at the same

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identical corner and policeman he started from; where the streets take a malicious delight in leading the wayfarer up against a dead wall or out to some wharf; where everything is so crooked that were a man to walk rapidly enough he could almost see himself going down another street. This is home-like. This is refreshing. This is America.

He also wrote:

General Grant left this city today. The closeness with which he has been watched during his stay, precludes any possibility of his having stolen anything. Early in the morning the distinguished smoker aired himself on Broadway, visiting Frederick's picture gallery, A. T. Stewart's new store, and attended the wedding reception of Mr. Hamilton Fish's daughter. Gen. Geo. B. McClellan called on the President-elect at the St. Nicholas, and was in private conference with him for over an hour. As the nature of the conference between the young "Napoleon of the West" and his chief is entirely unknown, everybody puts his own construction on it. I believe a majority of the political prophets have conceded to "Little Mac" a seat in Ulysses' cabinet. From his penchant for spades, I think he would be more at home in the Department of Agriculture.

I have not been able to help noticing, however, as I journeyed eastward, the rapid development of the pannier. I believe there was one visible in Peoria when I left. At Cincinnati, Fourth Street wore one timidly and awkwardly, evidently half afraid of them; at Washington, Pennsylvania Avenue sported them awkwardly, but numerous; Baltimore worried a very defiant one; at Philadelphia, Chestnut Street arrayed herself in them as a garment, and here, oh my! it's a case of nudity not to have one on. They are clearly a success. They have been "reviled and persecuted of men," but they have risen triumphant over the storm of abuse and sarcasm which has beat upon them.

The power of his descriptive pen was strongly and delightfully shown in another letter to the *Transcript*, under date of January 19, 1869:

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Not to "do" Plymouth Church is never to have been at or near Brooklyn, and more from a desire to see all the "lions" of this vicinity, than from any expectation of great good resulting from the pilgrimage, I consulted the universal guide book, the police, and wended my way to this house of worship, last Sunday night. It's easily found. After reaching Brooklyn you have only to follow the crowds that you see converging from all directions to a common center. That center is Plymouth Church.

I thought I would stroll leisurely down past the edifice so as to be sure of its exact locality before going there for the evening service. I knew that the congregation began to assemble long before the doors were open, but I was somewhat surprised on making my early reconnoissance to discover a crowd of nearly two hundred people collected on the sidewalk and in the street in front of the closed gates of the church yard, standing patiently there in the midst of a driving snow storm.

I mingled with these zealous pleasure seekers, and stood with them looking at a plain, unpretending, common-looking brick church, nothing gothic or imposing about it; its style of architecture might have been copied from any frontier church. A stranger passing through Brooklyn would not give it a second look, if perchance his eye rested on it at all. Nevertheless this is Henry Ward Beecher's church.

When the doors were opened, all strangers and visitors, all persons not pew owners, were seated in the galleries or the back seats to await, up to a certain hour, the arrival of pew holders, after which all the seats were thrown open, and Jew and Gentile, the pew holder and the sojourner in the land, take their chances alike, and are seated here, there and everywhere with democratic impartiality.

The long row of benches around the gallery was densely crowded with tourists, interlopers and plebeians long before the pews began to fill. I was amazed when an energetic usher ordered us to sit closer together, and actually got about a dozen more worshippers seated. Scarcely had we got settled into breathing postures again, when the same usher, inexorable as a street car conductor, packed us still closer and wedged in another delegation, and there we sat, our arms hanging down before us, hands solemnly clasped on our knees, jammed and

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pressed so tightly together, wrought into such intimate contact, that I could almost tell what my neighbor was thinking about, and had the usher trod on the corns of the man at the end of the seat, I believe all the rest of us would have "hollered".

But the pews began to fill up rapidly, and when the organist took his place and with masterly touches filled the room with grand impressive symphonies, the pews were opened to all, seats were let down across the aisle, the crowd that had been waiting outside the door came thronging in, and in a few minutes not a single seat, not a foot of vacant space could be seen in the house, nothing but a dense motionless sea of heads, a mass of silent, quiet, expectant humanity.

The interior of the church is as plain and simple as its exterior appearance. The pews are white, finished with dark colored polished wood, and though cushions are laid along all the pews, the backs of none of them are cushioned or even curved. A single circlet of gas in the centre of the ceiling lights the spacious auditorium. The first gallery runs clear around the room to the organ, which is built over and back of the pulpit. Its wood work is massive, rich-looking black walnut, and is not decked off with a profusion of gilded pipes and tinsel flourishes. Everything about the church inside and out is characterized by a delightful homelike simplicity. On a stand by the pulpit, and on the table beside Mr. Beecher's chair, you can always see beautiful bouquets, the only ornaments in the place, and what more fitting decorations can we find for the house of God than the beautiful creations of His own hand? Besides this first gallery a second one is built across the end of the room like the ordinary galleries of your western churches. Ahem! This was also filled to repletion.

Mr. Beecher's sermon, was of course, characteristic. His services have been described time and again by better and more glowing pens than mine (this one I am using now is a Washington Medallion), hence I will not attempt a description. One is charmed with him at the very outset. His delivery is perfect, every word reaches the most distant corners of the room, clear and distinct; his manner is at all times earnest, seldom excited, but always impressive, always carrying his audience with him.

Murmurs of laughter by his audience frequently interrupt his sermon. Sometimes they are very hearty outbursts. But

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whenever you hear the audience laugh, be sure a telling blow has been struck, or an argument clinched in a masterly manner. You cannot for the life of you help laughing at some of his illustrations and remarks, while you feel their force and vigor and depth through all their coating of humor, quaint and original. I never was a very great admirer of Mr. Beecher until Sunday night. Now I can't help feeling that my previous estimate of him has been a very unjust one. One seems to feel what the man really is, while listening to him.

And then his church is such a home-like place. The entire absence of formality, the simplicity and uniformity of everything around you, make you feel as much at home there, as if you paid seven or eight hundred dollars for a pew. And whenever any of my Peoria friends come to see me, we will go to hear Dr. Crosby (in my humble estimation the best preacher in New York) our first Sunday morning, and at night I'll drag them over to Brooklyn.

This was the sketch of a young man not yet recognized as even a newspaper man and whose fondest dreams did not include the fact that later he was to enjoy the personal friendship of Mr. Beecher, nor that in 1887, when a memorial was being prepared for the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, which was restricted to letters and literary contributions of a limited number from the most distinguished men and women of America and Europe, Edward W. Bok, who was gathering this material, asked Mr. Burdette to make his contribution in the following manner:

It is the special desire of the large number of Mr. Beecher's friends interested in this final tribute to his memory that it shall contain a contribution from the pen of a gentleman whom the renowned patriot preacher so warmly admired, and whose efforts to lighten the burdens of others he frequently referred to during his lifetime.

In making this request of you, Mr. Burdette, I beg that you will believe that it is one uppermost with me, and the granting of which I should esteem indeed a high favor.

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From the promises and contributions already in hand, including Generals Sherman, Fremont, and Howard, Admiral Porter, Canon Farrar, Dr. Talmage, Dr. Neuman Hall, Mrs. Gen'l. Grant, Mrs. Garfield, Henry Irving, Mde. Modjeska, Mme. Janauscheck, Dion Boucicault and a host of others equally famous, the memorial to Mr. Beecher promises to be most notable, and we should feel that Mr. Beecher's personal wish was carried out, could he but express it, were it to receive a contribution from your ready pen.

A few words of remembrance from you would give us all sincere pleasure, and I am therefore particularly anxious that you will grant it.

I can scarcely be too urgent in my request for your kind and valuable co-operation, and I fervently hope that you will extend this courtesy.

Again writing from New York, in a *Transcript* letter on the celebration of St. Patrick's day, he wrote:

It seems that St. Patrick's day in the morning is a different man from the same fellow in the afternoon. Of course, at night the "drowning of the Shamrock" was successfully performed wherever it was attempted, and was attempted wherever two or three Irishmen could be found. I didn't stay up to see this interesting part of the celebration, but sought my virtuous couch at an early hour, happy that S. P. D. had arrived, for I was tired of cold weather, and though I well knew that "one swallow does not make a summer," I was confident that there would be enough swallows in New York that night to make a complete set of seasons. But if such was the case, they have started another winter by overdoing the thing, for although we had a slight glimpse of spring when St. Patrick was here, this morning is cold enough to remind one of that touching little stanza of Robert Browning's:

"The first bird of spring
Attempted to sing,
But ere he had rounded a note,
He fell from the limb,
And a dead bird was him,
For the music had friz in his throat."

Maybe that isn't Browning. I wouldn't be positive.

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Robert J. Burdette always declared he went to New York with the avowed intention of ultimately "painting a great historic painting that was to cover a canvas as big as the side of a barn, with buckets of paint and a name made famous signed in the corner." But a letter to "Dear Lum" reveals some of the things he actually did, for he said:

The tubes of color would have cost fifty dollars, to say nothing of the dryer and oil varnish, but I was never able at that time to raise the fifty dollars.

New York did not seem to want any "great artist", at least not so young a one.

I presume that in the natural order of things you have sagely concluded that I have forgotten all about you in the whirl and tumult and bustle of a Metropolitan existence. Nay, not so, but I'm mortal busy, although I do feel terribly ashamed of my outrageous neglect of my best correspondent, the first one I ever had. I obtained soon after coming here, a clerkship with the Equitable Life Assurance Society, but left that position a week ago and am now following my own occupation, card writing, which is just as remunerative as the other and gives me more time to prosecute my studies. You wouldn't think that a man who covers paper with scrawls like this could write visiting cards, but on fancy lettering I can just knock the socks off of a printing machine.

I am attending night class in the school of Art at Cooper Institute, and I have fallen among a lot of good friends here, through whose influence I expect to get a ticket to the Academy of Design. I write cards about half the week or less, that meets the week's expenses, and the rest of the time goes in hard study. I never think of going to bed before twelve o'clock and I have written as late as two or three o'clock in the morning. I'm not making any money, barely meeting necessary expenses, but I'm finishing my education and getting a profession that has money in it. Have you noticed any of my "versatile and talented" productions floating around in the current literature of the day? There's lots of it.

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I have a real nice snug cozy room and when "Uncle" Andrew comes I am prepared to do the honors of my house and show him around the city. Had he come here Christmas he would have found me at a hotel, the "Belmont" down in the city, near Broadway. Now I have a nice room in a private house, up on 17th Street between 7th and 8th Avenues. I'm thoroughly posted on New York and its vicinity, am very metropolitan, and this stirring lively old town hasn't many places of interest that I don't know the ropes of.

It's a small village. I only live two miles from the City Hall, and you can't find the town built closer than it is around me. The village is about twenty-two miles in area and since I left Virginia I haven't seen a single patch of real live wild woods, nor enough fresh free air to keep a rat alive. My time is all my own now, so if any one wants to be shown around, let them come. I'll be only too glad to see a familiar face, for at times I'm woefully homesick.

I am becoming acquainted in a real good circle of people, but I don't want to go out much, or I'll have to keep it up, which would encroach too much on my precious precious time. But to a cove who always took as much delight in home and home pleasures and comforts as I did, this thing of living amongst perfect strangers is pretty hard, and it's going to be an awful pull to make out two years of it. But I can't really make myself what I want to be in any less time. So here's for it.

I am already established at "Ralph Wells'" Mission Sunday School (Grace Mission), the greatest Mission School in the United States, as Scriptural Artist, and the way the black-board is illuminated every Sunday astonishes Gotham. The lesson is always illustrated on the board. I have already perpetrated Jacob's ladder, Rebekah at the well, and some other difficult pieces. The drawings are made in colored crayon, very large, and have been highly and favorably commented on. I have no doubt of my ultimate success; it only requires courage and steady application.

Bless you, when I came here the city was and is now so overflowed with young men unable to get any kind of employment that the *Herald* and *Tribune* were urging them to leave the city and go anywhere, rather than stay here and starve.

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It rubbed me very hard for a while but I hung on, knew only one, just one man in all this great city, and I got a situation, and now, I, a rough chap from the prairies, a youth whose penmanship is execrable, who never put a foot inside of a commercial college, or received a mite of instruction in fancy lettering, am here in New York City, getting plenty of work to do in one of their finest vocations, and contending successfully against well established, cultured, finished opposition.

A man can make his way anywhere, if he only trusts in God and—pulls off his coat and shows that he means business. I don't believe God ever helps any man that lays on his back and prays, though he pray ever so lustily. A man wants to feel and pray as though God was going to do everything, and then get right off of his knees and go to work as though he had it all to do himself, and God wasn't to help him in the least.

End of the sermon.

In March he went down to Washington to attend the inauguration, caught a severe cold and was obliged to go to the hospital in Baltimore. Conditions following this were to put to severe test his usual optimism, courage and faith, as shown by a letter written in early summer:

Nobody knows, nobody ever shall know the half that I have suffered during this long dark cruel winter. Struggling alone, against established business, for a sure position; sick, tired, disappointed time and time again, almost driven to believe at times, that my attempt was a failure, how could I write to any one? It is all over now, thank God, but it has been terrible. But the prize is well worth it; I am now beginning to see before me the realization of my hopes, the fruits of all these sufferings and struggles—a name—position—and—Carrie. Night after night, I've robbed my pillow and given its time to my pen, urged on and sustained a great deal by love, a great deal by ambition.

Always keenly observant, but with little opportunity to have acquired sufficient knowledge to dare to offer critical opinion, it is somewhat surprising that he should

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have written, in less than six months after he reached New York, the following review:

The National Academy of Design is now thrown open to the public, on its 44th annual exhibition. The academy building itself, situated on Twenty-third Street, opposite the magnificent new building of the Young Men's Christian Association, attracts the eye by the singularity of its architecture, being modelled after a building on the Rialto, in Venice. The attendance at the exhibition this year has not been so large as formerly, and the public have been grievously disappointed at the display of paintings, and the art critics, outside artists and connoisseurs have handled the academy artists without gloves, and abused the pictures in all the ferocious terms of which art will admit. New York artists are always wrangling about something. Recently the bone of contention has been studios. When the Y. M. C. A. building is completed, these knights of the palette and easel will have new haunts, as there will be some twenty excellent studios in that edifice.

Of course, at these exhibitions there will always be jealousies and bickerings and discontent, and in this case, as usual, the best places in the rooms are appropriated to some very "woodenly" productions of the academicians, while some really excellent paintings of other artists are consigned to the corridor, where no artist likes to see his pictures hanging. Aside from this mismanagement, which is palpable to every one, the display of paintings is highly creditable to American art.

There is but little promise, in the paintings now on exhibition at the academy, of many future Raphaels or Claudes or Turners, and only once in a while, as you pass through the building, are you attracted very strikingly by any picture. Kensett has a very beautiful picture here, "Lake George"; a fine sense of beauty glows throughout the painting, which is pure Raphael in its delicacy of detail and exquisite finish, and is in delightful contrast with many subjects around it, whose colors are opaque and muddy, and the drawing stiff and unnatural. Durand, long president of the academy, whose name is in high honor by American artists, gives this exhibition his farewell productions. A new and younger class of artists have rather been crowding in between him and the public favor, for

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Durand once painted for the love of art, and now he does so for money, and gold is a wretched substitute for an enthusiastic devotion to art. His "Trysting Tree" is marked by his usual truthfulness of conception and beauty of execution. Eliza Greatorex, very recently elected as associate of the academy, has some pen and ink sketches, finely executed, but of no striking beauty.

"Gettysburg," in the sculpture room, is like all battle pieces, and will answer just as well for any other "burg". A General (Meade, I believe) and staff loom up beside a medicine wagon, and the usual number of wounded men are reclining in picturesque attitudes, looking very interesting in their neatly fitting uniforms and bandaged heads, as I never saw wounded men look, and a little further on some others are supporting themselves on their elbows, and while a charging regiment tramples over them, and their life blood gushes out, are waving their hats, and, I doubt not, in the poetic conception of the artist, shouting "All hail to the stars and stripes!"

Many a wounded soldier, loyal and brave, have I heard swear like a pirate while he struggled to get out of the way, but never a one did I know who lay still and said "All hail, etc.", or make any other such ill-timed remarks. Ritchie's "Deathbed of Lincoln" falls far below this artist's other efforts. The subject, an unpleasant one in itself, is treated without any refinement.

I lingered long before "Early Grief" by Constant Mayer. A poor girl in mourning over a dead bird, the conception is beautiful and the execution perfect. It hardly seems like a work of art. You look at the grieving child, her sorrows made all the more touching by her poor dress, and picturesque by the woodland scenes around her, and you almost expect to see the little lips grieve, and the mournful eyes in their tearful beauty, lift to yours. The empty wicker cage is touchingly suggestive, and beside it lies the body of the silent songster, the sole joy and pet of the little grief-stricken figure mourning over it. There is a world of pathos in the face of the girl, wearing that expression of pent-up grief just ready to break forth in sobs. The sentiment of the painting is in perfect keeping with its execution, and the picture well displays that rare faculty which Constant Mayer possesses of infusing a charming poetry into his pictures.

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In chilling contrast with this gem, you pause before a "Portrait of a Gentleman", without some dozen or so of which no gallery is complete. A stupid, unmeaning face, with nothing of expression of beauty in the face, and altogether would look well in the dark, or on a tavern sign. Then there is a sea scene. A large cast iron, bottle-green breaker is coming in, or rather has been coming in, but has stopped, the top is curved over with beautiful precision, and in one place where it breaks against two well developed three-cornered rocks the dashing spray looks like the terrific explosion of a barrel of flour. This study would make an excellent design for a fire board, if it is in the N. A. D.

Beard's "Raining cats and dogs" is funny and I like it, although it is rank heresy to say so, for it is condemned by the art critics as unworthy such an artist. Its drawing and composition are good, but the subject is beneath the notice of art, they say. The painting is an illustration of the old expression which is given as its title. A pelting storm of savage dogs and felines is coming down in a way that is a caution to "umberills". Here a hapless tabby is squelched by falling a la spread eagle, there two savage dogs have touched terra firma in safety, and fallen upon each other's necks and things in fierce combat; then a ferocious Thomas feline, with swollen narrative and indignant fur, approaches a second T. F., who is somewhat discomposed by his trip from the clouds, and timidly declines the first T. F.'s belligerent overtures. The background is filled in with indiscriminate dog fights, and the air is dark with falling, howling, fighting cani-felinity. (How is that?) But the critics condemn the subject because it is unworthy of the genius of Beard, and by the same reason they outlaw his "There was an old woman who lived in a shoe", the funniest picture in the world. It's indescribable. The big shoe, lying under the hill, the colony of children scattered over the foreground, in all the phases of devilment and mischief that children can get into, the old woman issuing forth to administer the well-known broth and castigation. Oh, who that ever was a child and revelled in the beauties of "Mother Goose Melodies" but would like this picture?

I admire an artist who dares paint for the people, just as I admire musicians who dare sing and play for the people.

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Rossini and "Claribel" are dead. The world had to stand still a little while when the great maestro died, and a London musical journal gives half a column of sneers at "Claribel", but for all these sneers, how much of "Claribel's" music will reach hearts that Rossini's will never touch. I would rather laugh all day over Beard's "Old Woman, etc." than wander among twenty academies filled with these tiresome high art landscapes, with their monotony of green meadows and blue mountains and gray rocks, with here and there an impossible cow, and everywhere the inevitable man with the red shirt and the fishing pole. And if a highly cultivated, correct taste leads us to prefer the thunder and crash, and roar, and operatic dissonance of the "peace jubilee" to the simple, charming melodies we have listened to in the home circle, then I desire that my taste should ever be vicious and ungraded. It is amusing to listen to a knot of art critics and connoisseurs tear a picture to pieces. They are not artists themselves, couldn't whitewash a fence, much less paint a landscape, but they are well up in the rules of art, and very few pictures escape their ravages. It is customary to first pronounce the painting a daub, on general principles; then the drawing is hard, stiff, poor, the coloring is weak, wretched in fact, the perspective is faulty, the whole thing is decidedly "woodeny". The composition is attacked, and you often learn that a picture which had struck you as a fine painting, is only a mass of inaccuracies and violations of beauty and harmony, unfit for a political transparency. "Ars probat artificem."

In September, 1869, he wrote to his aunt from "217 West 17th Street, New York City", which he designated as "the home of the friendless and the friend of the homeless street", saying he was still studying at Cooper Institute, taking "French, German and Art", and intended to go to Europe the following spring with prospects as occasional reporter on New York papers. This letter, written partially in rhyme, and filled with outrageous punning, admitted that financial necessities were very great. It was not difficult, under such

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circumstances, to throw down the pencil and brush, and follow off on an expedition of which he later wrote:

I was an Art student in New York, ambitious and dreaming of the day when I should paint a historical painting of the scenes of blood and carnage that I had witnessed during the war. It gradually dawned on me I was going to do a splendid imitation of "The Dying Skeleton" first. Just then I had a chance to go to Cuba in the ten year war. Went on the *Lillian*; she was a British ship, or used to be. Was what the sailors call a "Pickpocket", very swift, but burning so much coal and oil that she ate up all of the profits of an honest voyage. She was a dandy blockade runner, however, and dodged in and out of the Southern ports during our Civil War, so she was just the craft for a filibustering expedition. We had to land some arms one dark night. Now don't tell me Spaniards can't shoot. They shot me that night the first time they fired; in the dark too, and I was the smallest man on the boat. I was sent back to Savannah, went into the hospital, and had my cracked plating repaired.

Returning to New York, physically out of condition and dispirited, a most welcome letter was soon received from Enoch Emery, the editor of the Peoria *Transcript*, asking him to return and take a position on the paper. He counted his cash and found he had just enough for a ticket, and leaving his drawing board, crayons and books where he last used them at Cooper Institute, he packed his few personal belongings and taking a little three dollar wooden clock under his arm, he abandoned the brush for the pen and started back to Peoria. That little clock was one of his valued possessions all his life, and stands today above a book case in his study in Sunnycrest, where it still ticked as the heart of its possessor ceased to beat in response, and goes on marking time here while he has entered upon an eternity of time unmarked by day or night.

CHAPTER IV

NEWSPAPER CAREER

THIS transition from self-expression by brush to self-expression by pen, he referred to when the *Transcript* had become the *Herald Transcript*, and was celebrating a golden jubilee, and he wrote of his work:

My first appearance in cold type was in the columns of the *Transcript*. The article was a letter I wrote to my father from the army when I was a soldier in the 47th Illinois. It appeared some time, I think, in 1862 or '63. Then afterwards I entered the world of journalism by the same path. I will never forget my first night on the *Transcript*. I was telegraph editor, and "Phocian" Howard, then on the editorial staff, under the Emerys, sat down at my desk and wrote down for me on a slip of paper the proof marks I was to use. I have done some newspaper and literary work since that night, but nothing that has ever puffed me up with wicked and vaunting pride; nothing that has looked so clear and strong and illuminating in type, as the "the's" and "and's" I inserted in the night despatches, and the thrilling scare heads I wrote over the most commonplace paragraphs.

I do not know what the world of critics thought, or may think, of my work in that edition of the *Transcript*, but it was what I called "Literature".

The proof marks referred to were preserved for thirty-five years, the original piece of paper, 4 x 5 inches, being pasted in a scrap book.

Another interview ran:

The *Transcript* is my newspaper Alma Mater. I began in telegraph flimsy on this palladium of liberty in 1869. Enoch Emery was the proprietor and editor. John Emery was second in command; George Kent was city editor; Sam Patton was

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foreman; George Keady held the "ad" case, and I—well, I hate to say it, but I ran the paper, at least I thought I did, which was the same thing.

Soon after beginning the reportorial work, he was sent out for an interview, of which he often spoke in the later years, when he himself was a lecturer and being interviewed by some abashed reporter:

Back in 1870 I was a "new man" on the Peoria *Transcript* and just about the hour that I became an employe of the paper, Horace Greeley arrived in Peoria. I was assigned to the Greeley story by the city editor and started out to interview him.

After I had sent my card up to Mr. Greeley, I began to wish I had it back. I hoped that he would not be in his room and that, if he was, he would refuse to see me. He was in his room and he did not refuse to see me. Then, how scared I was.

I knocked on the door and Mr. Greeley called out:

"Come in."

I went in and was so badly frightened that I could not think what to talk about, but finally, I ventured:

"You have been lecturing, have you not, Mr. Greeley?"

Answer—"Yes."

Then it was so quiet that you could have heard the microbes gnaw if there had been a smallpox patient around.

I sat there for a minute or two and was getting more frightened every minute. At last I thought of another question.

"Have your lectures been successful, Mr. Greeley?"

"Young man," he replied, "do you know what a successful lecture is?"

I didn't know and I owned up that I didn't. Then Mr. Greeley explained that a successful lecture is one where more people stay in than go out. He wound up by telling me that his lectures had been "successful".

The dominant influence of this period of his life was the "Carrie" referred to in one of his New York letters and for whom love and ambition had spurred him on. Carrie S. Garrett was born in Peoria December 5, 1847,

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and came of a stock as sturdy and active as that of young Burdette. Her father, Auren Garrett, as a boy came to Peoria with his father, Col. Augustus O. Garrett, who placed his family and goods on a schooner bound from Buffalo to the then trading post at Chicago, arriving in August, 1833. They found a marshy place with some scattered log huts, a few white people and native Indian tribes. Inducements were offered them to locate there, but they preferred Peoria, which at this time was a thriving western village.

Garrett the elder was an experienced man of affairs, of fine appearance, and he established and operated the Peoria Hotel, the first hotel in Peoria. Here was organized the first church of Peoria, St. Jude's, and the first Masonic Lodge, with the elder Garrett as vestryman of one and officer of the other. In 1840 Col. Garrett opened a new hotel, the Planter House, the largest and best hotel in the State and the scene of the early social and political life of Peoria. Here Martin Van Buren was entertained on his memorable visit in 1842, and Lincoln and other noted men of the time were frequent guests and familiar acquaintances of the family.

Auren Garrett, Mr. Burdette's future father-in-law, inherited his father's courage and adventurous spirit, for in 1835 he accompanied a party of United States troops removing the Pottawatomie Indians to the then far West, two hundred miles beyond Council Bluffs. On the return trip the party saw no white man between Fort Leavenworth and Rock Island. At that time Davenport, for whom the city of Davenport, Iowa, took its name, was running the ferry between Rock Island and the Iowa shore, and was the only white man then living on the site of the present prosperous city.

Miss Garrett was married to Mr. Burdette on March 4, 1870, when she was an invalid, and so feeble

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that her responses could only be made by a slight movement of the eye and a pressure of the hand. She later rallied somewhat, but always remained an invalid. A sister, Medorah Garrett, who was her constant attendant at this time, went with them to their new home, and remained a devoted member of the family until her own death in 1910.

Carrie Garrett was a young woman possessed of rare qualities of mind and character, strength and sweetness. Two pen pictures her husband sketched of her years after her sufferings had ceased, and his tender memory visualizes her thus:

There stands by my side a girlish figure, slender, delicate, an oval face, with lips most daintily graven by Nature's tenderest caresses; eyes of brown, clear, tender, loving, joyous; in silken waves the dark hair falls away from the brow of snow. Hands of a child rest on my arms. She stands there—a picture of morning. Hope shines in her radiant eyes. Faith sings in the intonations of her voice. Such courage burns in the heart of her; such lofty inspiration throbs in her soul, as not even her lover could have dreamed in that summer time when all our days were made of gold and our nights of silver. It is my sweetheart.

The small, one-story brick house in which Mr. Burdette and his bride began housekeeping was built by Auren Garrett in 1846 at the foot of the bluff fronting on Perry Avenue, and was given by him to the young people at the time of their marriage.

This home, which was founded on love alone, brought insistent demands upon him, providing for its maintenance, straining every energy he possessed in newspaper activity. The continued suffering tore at his heart-strings, but his sympathy and love and tender care of wife so appealed to the public, which was growing to be his personal friend, that it honored

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him for this unusual demonstration of unstinted devotion and abandon of unselfishness which was always to remain one of the high lights of his character. She, in turn, gave him the inspiration and steady influence his brilliant talents and unrestrained nature needed.

During the year on the *Transcript* he had become the city editor, and his humor more and more crept into the local page. One day he was sent for by the editor, who sought to sternly repress him:

"Sit down, Mr. Burdette," said Mr. Emery. "I understand that only one of the two lunatics that got away from the crazy house last week has been recaptured. What has become of the other?"

"Why—why—" stammered the local editor. "Why, I haven't any idea, Mr. Emery. How should I?"

"Oh, I don't know," responded the chief. "I thought possibly he might be secreted somewhere about this building and that you might know about him."

"I haven't any knowledge of him at all," said the puzzled Burdette.

"Then it must have been that drunken man I met going down the stairs last night," continued Emery, "or possibly you have some friend with a feeble mind who gets into this office with false keys. Anyway, somebody has been giving a lot of infernal drivel to the foreman lately, and it's been printed on your page. I wouldn't insult your intelligence, Bob, by assuming that it got in with your knowledge, but you must have been mighty heedless of late and you really must be more careful in the future. Seriously," he continued in a meant-to-be-not-unkindly tone, "you should not try to write humor. When I want anything funny in the paper I'll write it myself."

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He bade me learn to walk before I tried to prance, but it was so much more fun to prance, so I went over on an afternoon paper called the *Review*, and kept on prancing.

His passing from the *Transcript* to the Peoria *Review* gave him a field of humorous writing that he had not before enjoyed, but the freedom of pen was not without limitation, for the original Peoria *Review* suspended, and the material was sold to the proprietors of the *Transcript* and *Democrat*. It did not, however, stay suspended long, for a number of the employees connected with the old paper started a small daily with the same name. An injunction was obtained preventing the use of the name "*Review*," and for a while the new paper was published as *The Peoria Evening Injunction*.

"Bob says they will publish the paper if they have to change the name fifty times a day," was the welcome the *Illinois Sentinel* gave it. The injunction, however, was finally dissolved and the *Review* had a precarious career for a few years, finally dying a slow death by starvation.

Mr. Burdette was one of those concerned with the founding of the new *Review*, and its columns reflected the liveliness of his humorous imagination. Crude and bald were many of his humorous sketches, and yet they indicated the versatility of his fancy, and gave the promise which was afterwards fulfilled when he went to the *Hawk-Eye*. "Lively as a cricket" was the comment of one of its contemporaries, as to the new paper, and even so conservative a paper as the Springfield, Massachusetts, *Republican*, noted at once its individuality and the genius of the youthful Burdette, and warned the "Danbury news man" to look to his laurels. One of his daring contributions he tells of himself:

When I was younger than I now am by 15 years, I was writing up immortal dog fights and fadeless "river news", and

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undying “real estate transfers”, and soul-inspiring “proceedings of the city council” on the Peoria *Review*. Among many valuable contributors, every man, woman and child in the State of Illinois used to write for that very able and influential journal.

There was one young man who weighed about as many years as myself, against whom I conceived a violent hatred. Not a personal spite, oh, no; but he used to steal poetry and use the paper as a “fence”. He would deliberately copy something from Burns, or Byron, or Tennyson and write above it “By J. Watson Wallingford”, and in it would go, fourth page, leaded.

He was in favor with the management, somehow, and being a subaltern, I was restrained from sitting down upon him. I wanted to, but I “dassent”. I had a very large salary—to get—on that journal, and did not propose to quarrel with my bread—there was no butter—by cutspoken revolt.

But one day, all the great and wise men on the paper went down to Galesburg to a district convention, and J. Watson Wallingtord came in with “A Song—by J. Watson Wallingford”, and a little note from the manager ordering it in fourth page, lead, that day. I read the stanzas after the poet went away. The poem was one of Byron’s “Stanzas for Music”, so I couldn’t complain about the poetry, but I couldn’t just see why Wallingford should call it “A Song”.

I will admit right here that I do not read music at sight; I can’t even read a grace note at ten days’ sight. I do not know much about music. I can play on the kazoo a little when the tune is easy. But it seemed to me that for “A Song” that poem looked kind of bare and friendless. There was nothing to indicate that it was a song, except the title, and the title of a poem or the text of a sermon does not necessarily indicate the subject treated in the discourse. If it was “A Song” it was doubtless intended to be sung, and how could people sing it unless the tune was indicated?

Suppose each one of our readers, on receiving a copy of the *Review* containing that song, should attempt to sing it to some tune of his own? What discord would ensue! As a Journalist with a large J. I could not cast such a brand of discord upon the country. I was determined, if that “Song” went in the

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paper as a "Song", that it should at least be sung in harmony by our readers and I would be the "precentor" myself.

I pondered over those stanzas for a long time, until at length I hit upon a jingle that seemed to fit. I carefully locked the sanctum door to keep the printers from getting at me and slaying me, and sang the "Song" clear through. Then I wrote a little editorial paragraph calling attention to it, and predicting that it would become the most popular campaign song of the century, and, when the paper came out that afternoon, J. Watson Wallingford and his friends were pleased, I think, to see his poem in this fair guise:

A SONG

BY J. WATSON WALLINGFORD

(Tune—"Vilikins and His Dinah")

I speak not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name,
There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in thy fame;
But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart
The deep thoughts that dwell in that silence of heart.

With my tu-ri-li, u-ri-li, u-ri-li—a,
Singing tu ri li, u ri li, u ri li - a;
etc., etc.

And so on through the five stanzas of the well-known poem. It did look too pretty in print for anything. I went out in the news room and the printers, each holding a copy of the paper in his hands, stood up and sang it. The effect was thrilling.

But the music didn't fairly begin until that night, after the edition was all worked off and the mails were gone, and "the management" returned from the convention. Music in the air! There was English opera for you. The poor poet cried. The editor-in-chief wanted to laugh, but couldn't, because the directors were mad. Everybody talked at once and abused me, although I contended that my act was a musical inspiration that saved the "Song" from derision. I claimed that the "Song" was incomplete without a tune and a refrain.

You see Peoria is Emma Abbott's native town, and everything of a musical character there is very severely criticised, and I said I wanted to maintain the credit of the town. No good; the poet only cried harder, said he was disgraced for

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ever, and the directors all agreed with him, and none of them, in the supreme selfishness of their grief, ever thought how Byron would like it.

At one time I half wished I had allowed the "Song" to go in the incomplete, ragged state in which it came to my hands. But then I reflected that I had only done my duty as a journalist, and if necessary I was ready to go to the steak for it; rare and no gravy. Finally, matters were adjusted. I was permitted to retain my position on the editorial staff of the paper on condition that I publish a personal apology to J. Watson Wallingford. To this I agreed.

I wrote the apology the next day and sent it to the composing room. But when it came up in proof, J. Watson Wallingford was sent for. He and the manager and two directors read it, and held a brief consultation over it, to which council I was not invited, but the foreman told me that it came back marked "dead". It never was published. I don't know what was wrong with it. I had labored over it a long time, and thought it was as good an apology as I had ever seen go out of the shops. I went down stairs and asked the pressman if he knew what was the trouble, and he said he thought "she had slipped an eccentric, and was only workin' one side when he saw her".

These months were full of excitement and anxiety.

The *Review* marked an era in our journalistic career which we lived to ponder over with tears. It was the only daily paper we ever helped to start. It precious soon got the start of everybody connected with it. We had that little twilight twinkler for nearly a quarter of a year. Then it had us the rest of the time.

A Burlington friend afterwards met him on the street and asked him how his Peoria paper succeeded.
"Did you make much money?"

"Money!" repeated Burdette. "Money! Did you ever start a paper?"

"No, I believe not," said the Burlington man.

"Well, you ought to try it. I started one once. Yes, I started one. We called it the *Peoria Review*, and it was started to fill a long-felt want."

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"Did you have any partners?"

"Yes, Jerry Cochrane was my partner. There were several comforting things about that paper. For instance, Jerry and I always knew on Monday morning that we would never have money enough on Saturday night to pay the hands off, and we never had. The hands knew it, too, so they were never shocked by disappointment. We ran that way for a while, getting more deeply in debt all the time. At last one morning I entered the office and found Jerry looking rather solemn.

"'Jerry,' said I, 'you need another partner.'

"'Yes, we need a new one,' he rejoined.

"'A business man,' said I.

"'One with executive ability,' said he.

"'A financier,' I observed.

"'One who can take hold of things and turn them into money,' he concluded.

"'Then I have got the man you want,' said I, and I introduced him to Frank Hitchcock, the sheriff. Jerry said Frank was the man he had been looking for, so we installed him at once."

"Was Hitchcock a good business man?" asked the friend.

"Oh, yes," said Burdette, "everything he touched turned into money. He proved to be all we had anticipated and he ran the paper with the greatest success until he turned that into money."

"What was the final result?"

"Well, when we wound up there was nothing left but two passes—one to Cincinnati and one to Burlington. We divided them up and went in different directions."

Referring to this same experience at a banquet of newspaper men many years later, he said:

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There has somehow gotten into the mind of the great public which exists for the support of newspaper men and journalists—the latter crowding the census by thousands where the former sit solitary—that the newspaper publisher is a man of vast wealth, most of which is predatory.

There are exceptions. I was a newspaper publisher once. The distinction didn't last much longer than Mulvaney's chevrons. But the experience was wild, thrilling, exciting. Falling down stairs with a kitchen stove wouldn't have compensated me for the loss of it. It was the old printer's story of "a nonpareil paper in a bourgeois town". By manufacturing all the news, local and foreign, at the desk, I saved the expense of reporters and the Associated Press franchise. And that with Melville Stone living at Toulon, only forty miles away.

And I always had news enough to fill the paper to the limit, which was the Chase. I—or rather "we"—never permitted advertising matter to crowd out the news. Or anything else. And the news was of a character to keep the hair of the town on end like frets upon the porkful quilcupine.

But, alas! a skyrocket isn't a comet. And even a comet isn't a planet. Somehow I lacked the publisher's instinct. My paper came down. I don't even know where it lit. But I stayed up. Higher than a kite. And I've been up ever since. Cloudland is good enough for me. Oh, I come down occasionally to buy groceries and ask a publisher for my check. But I don't live down here. I vote in California. I look back upon my experience as "editor and publisher" like unto the man who wakes up in the morning under the bed; crawls out and sees his "hat of the highest" hanging on the gas-burner with the jet—full head on—blazing through the crown thereof; all the pictures on the floor and all his clothes hanging on the picture-hooks; windows wide open and the snow blowing in; everything where nothing should be and nothing where anything should be—"Gee! what a glorious time I must have had last night!" It was splendid but it wasn't newspaper publishing. I wouldn't have missed it for a thousand dollars. I didn't.

While the owners of the Burlington *Hawk-Eye* had noted with increasing interest the liveliness of the *Review* columns, upon its death they had resolved to

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take young Burdette to themselves, where he might have a wider field and freer opportunity for his humorous and philosophical writings. Of this transition period Mr. Burdette wrote:

While I was looking around for something to do I thought of the Burlington *Hawk-Eye*. It was a sober, staid old paper, financially solid. I was young and active. Thought I, I can do that paper good. If I can get on the staff I am sure it will do me good. Well, I was thinking of going over there, when one day its business manager, Mr. Wheeler, came to see me, and offered me a position as city editor and reporter. If I live ten thousand years it will not be long enough time for me to be sufficiently thankful that I accepted the offer, and besides that, I am proud of the fact they sent for me.

His feeling of gratitude can be well understood when we review his nearly ten years of struggle in an effort to find his place and in which he had made two, if not three, distinct failures. As a school teacher he admitted himself to be wholly without qualification. His life in New York was checkered with hope and despair, and in the end he was reluctantly compelled to abandon his dream of becoming an artist. The *Review*, which he helped to establish with much youthful enthusiasm, had a brief span of life and its collapse forced him again to look for a position.

And yet, notwithstanding it all, he brought to Burlington the same optimism, the same irrepressible humor and the same determination to succeed that he might have had had he never met with failure at all. Indeed, the first picture we have of him at Burlington, which was in October, 1874, is that of the young man with a distinct gift for story telling and its humorous embellishment, making his acquaintances laugh to tears with an account of the collapse of the Peoria *Review* enterprise.

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George S. Jamison, with whom he spent his first Sunday in Burlington, writes entertainingly his reminiscence of the humorist's first appearance in Burlington:

He arrived in Burlington on a Saturday evening in time to attend a performance at the old Union Hall, the then theatre of the town, where he was introduced by the late Major Blackmar, formerly of the *Hawk-Eye* company, to a fellow scribe. "Bob" made an engagement with his new acquaintance to meet him Sunday afternoon and the two strolled about meeting a few others who joined the party. They repaired to the office of the Pullman Palace Car Company, at the former Union depot, where Mr. Burdette was urged to tell his experiences running a newspaper in Peoria without capital. The recital proved a "first night" success, as the audience was later found in different stages of convulsions, some under the desks of the office, some gasping for more wind power to laugh with, others steadyng themselves by the gas brackets while they howled in incoherent glee, and the remainder lay limp and paralyzed over trunks and other bric-a-brac of the Pullman Company.

From that Sunday afternoon Mr. Burdette was a marked man. The newspaper men took to him instantaneously, being attracted, as thousands of other people since have been, by his personal magnetism, which he possesses in so marked a degree.

One of Mr. Burdette's associates of the *Hawk-Eye* tells the following story, which illustrates his abounding resourcefulness:

One night Bob and his editorial chum, Al Leadley, long since gone over to the better world, were lazing, and the foreman of the composing room descended on them with the complaint that it was eleven P. M. and he hadn't a line of "city" yet. "That's too bad," said Burdette; "just watch our smoke, John." And at one A. M. the same foreman came down on the double quick and yelled, "for Heaven's sake quit, I've got more stuff now than I could use in two nights."

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Mr. Burdette was assigned to report a Republican convention one afternoon. As the district was new to him, the late Frank Hatton, the owner of the *Hawk-Eye*, went to the hall and kept him posted as to the identity of the various speakers. A boy ran to the *Hawk-Eye* office with Mr. Burdette's copy, with the result that the *Hawk-Eye* extra greeted the delegates as they were leaving the hall. This was the more surprising as the Burlington *Hawk-Eye* was such a staid old paper.

The Burlington *Hawk-Eye* surely was a staid old paper. Established by James G. Edwards, the first number was published June 6, 1839, under the name "*Iowa Patriot*." Burlington had become the capital of the Territory of Iowa and Mr. Edwards had profited by a portion of the territorial printing, and he concluded to accept the invitation of Burlington people to remove his plant from Fort Madison to Burlington. This was the embryo of the Burlington *Hawk-Eye*. In October, 1874, Edwards and Beardsley transferred the property to the *Hawk-Eye* Publishing Company, with Frank Hatton the president and editor-in-chief, Robert J. Burdette, city and later managing editor, Charles Beardsley and J. L. Waite, associate editors. The business managers under Hatton's administration were successively C. Y. Wheeler, Major H. W. Hall, John W. Burdette. In 1879 Hatton was appointed postmaster of Burlington, and passed on to Postmaster General of the United States under President Arthur.

The clearest account of his first connection with the Burlington *Hawk-Eye* is given us by J. E. Calkins, who succeeded Mr. Burdette as city editor of the *Hawk-Eye* and served in that capacity for a number of years. He it was to whose desk came Mr. Burdette's letters written as "Roaming Robert" letters, while he was upon the

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road to fill his platform engagements. The friendship between the two men that began at that time lasted until the death of Mr. Burdette. On his seventieth birthday, Mr. Calkins wrote him a letter full of genuine affection and appreciation, and with many tender references to the old days when both were struggling upon a far western newspaper in what was little more than a pioneer community. Of the early *Hawk-Eye* days Mr. Calkins writes:

The period Mr. Burdette spent in Burlington, Iowa, as city editor and special correspondent of the Burlington *Hawk-Eye*, was the period that directed and determined his evolution as a humorist, and the period that brought him a sufficient measure of celebrity to enable him to launch himself as a popular lecturer, with a prosperous voyage to a golden success.

In Peoria he had given a rein more or less free to his bent for humor, but he had only local fame as a funny man. The *Hawk-Eye* was in need of a city editor; and the business manager of that paper insisted that what it needed was a man with a mind and soul above police court and local railroad news, and so it came about that Mr. Burdette, a young man then (for that was around forty years ago), was engaged. He came with a contract, which was a thing unusual in those days, and by the terms of that contract he had a sway over his department that was freer than that of any other city editor in all that region.

There is a story, pleasant to hear and possibly true in some degree, that Mr. Burdette's drift into professional humor followed naturally upon his efforts to beguile the tedious hours of his young invalid wife. She was sorely afflicted with a prostrating malady that finally laid her a helpless cripple, and her sufferings were severe, but patiently and wonderfully endured.

Her husband, the story goes, endeavored to lighten her gloomy hours by bringing home with him at noon and evening some funny story. There is no difficulty in believing that these anecdotes, personal and fanciful, were amusing; at any rate it is said that Mrs. Burdette enjoyed them, and at length began

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to urge him to print them, holding that if they could make a sick wife laugh, they should, at least, make the rest of mankind smile; and so, without much persuasion, he began.

In any event, when he came from Peoria to the sober old *Hawk-Eye*, which made a business of taking itself so seriously that it was almost painful, he came to smile. Mrs. Burdette's illness grew more and more serious; the treadmill of the "local's" desk was anything but a rosy situation; there was no vision of fame or fortune ahead, and the specter of consuming suffering sat at his hearth day and night, and financial burdens were heavy, but still he smiled.

All that Burlington and the rest of the world knew about it was that Mrs. Burdette lived in the midst of anguish, and that he was exceedingly gentle and fond and careful of her, so that, for all her pitiful condition, she was still a happy woman—and that the city page of the *Hawk-Eye* was almost useless as a news letter, but so unprecedently interesting that everybody simply had to read it. No matter what the trial at his home, and no matter what great and momentous events might be stirring the little old town to its foundations, there was not very much of anything on the local page of the *Hawk-Eye* but Bob Burdette's rib-racking nonsense. In all its life the staid old *Hawk-Eye* had never said so little about the new houses out on North Hill, and the runaways and plain drunks down town, or been so readable or so popular.

The editor of the *Hawk-Eye* was Dr. Beardsley, a tall, thin man, gentle and courteous, but with an incurable belief that the chief end of a city editor is to tell all the doings of the town and refrain from all printed mirth as unseemly. Dr. Beardsley had not been the discoverer of Bob Burdette, and he chafed, and fumed, and finally exploded. There was news enough in town, but instead of it the *Hawk-Eye* was printing only nonsense!

But the other man, in the business office, had some subscription figures to show in answer, and that was about all the answer he made, or needed to make. If there was anything the old *Hawk-Eye* needed it was more subscribers and advertisers, and for once they were both headed toward it. So Dr. Beardsley returned to the wonted labor of his editorials, and Bob went on writing and printing his genial foolery, and the business continued to come, and all Burlington was happy.

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Did anybody on West Hill care that a \$40,000 fire was covered in a paragraph? Not so long as there was a mirthful column recounting the adventures of Middlerib. Did South Hill miss a full report of the political rally at South Hill Square? Not if Bob had remembered to adorn a page with the latest adventures of Old Bilderback and Young Bilderback, his mischievous son. Good Doc. Beardsley, upstairs, might frown, and do even worse, but the habit of taking the *Hawk-Eye* spread, in a very contagion of risibility, till the subscription list was dizzying, and business fairly boomed in the once quiet old counting room.

That trait of kindness and gentleness with others must have been elemental in Mr. Burdette's makeup, for in those days, before he had evaporated the enthusiasms of youth, and learned caution by all manner of experience, he was never known to give offense by his jokes. His humor was generally—not always, but nearly always—impersonal. His funny stories were characteristic, but his characters were fictitious. He made a mock of no man in order to raise a laugh. But on the other hand, the city pages of the *Hawk-Eye* of those days show more than one obituary sketch so filled with sympathy and tenderness, and so fraught with pathos, that they can hardly be read without moist eyes, though the ink on those musty old pages has been dry these forty years.

There wasn't a great fund of material for a humorist in Burlington in those days. The people of the little burg of some 15,000 inhabitants were so busy trying to outgrow Chicago and St. Louis that they hadn't thought much about taking time to laugh at anything. But little by little Bob Burdette ferreted out unsuspected sources of smiles. An old cutter, stranded by some thaw, or Hallowe'en prank, lingered, summer and winter, by the side street on South Hill, where Mr. Burdette passed it daily. Others saw nothing funny about it, but he made "The Red Sleigh on Maple Street" famous from one end of the land to the other.

The town had wrung from the Burlington road a concession in the form of a somewhat large and expensive viaduct over its tracks, and then had let it stand there to rot and fall down without ever a soul having set foot upon it, the city finances being unequal to the strain of providing approaches. The

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Aldermen and the people of Burlington had found the "Sixth Street Bridge" a very serious and perplexing affair, but when Bob Burdette got his bearings he made it a joke, and one that echoed far and wide. An eyesore for years had been a low-lying city block, in the business section. It was subject to overflow, and was tenanted by two or three unkempt squatter families with a plentiful following of dogs, geese and uncared-for children, and rejoiced in the singularly befitting name of Happy Hollow. The police and the board of health and the nice people of the town found this spot a problem and a vexation, but it was a mine of genuine treasure to the laughing *Hawk-Eye* man.

It wasn't news that Bob Burdette was writing then, but something larger and more valuable. He was unconsciously moulding himself, training himself, and polishing his thoughts and words and phrases into that singularly felicitous perfection which his work of late years all came to show. No other man of all the humorists of this country, big and little, possessed such grace of composition, or such happy conceit of humorous utterance, and these free unfettered days on the *Hawk-Eye* were the ones that began the substantial moulding and shaping of his great talent.

Through this period of three or four years the older people of Burlington clearly recall two salient features of their life. One was the morning watch for the *Hawk-Eye* carrier, who was bringing the latest doings of Bilderback and Middlerib, and the other was the vision of Mrs. Burdette, and her husband's devoted tenderness. They drove for her benefit, a low-hung phaeton, drawn by a gentle pony. Into this he would lift her slight form, bent and wrenched by her disease, as he would carry and place a baby; and out of it, at the end of the drive, he would lift her again and carry her in. They visited friends this way, and they went to church, and even to some entertainments.

There was no dramatic pretense about it, no prudery, and no senseless timidity; simply if she went at all she had to be carried, and her husband was the one to carry her. Touching and pathetic was the scene whenever it was enacted, because it was so unaffectedly simple and natural. Mrs. Burdette is still quoted in Burlington as the high mark of a cheerful patience

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and happy helplessness, which all should emulate, but which only a few of us can attain, and her husband is still the very mould and pattern there of conjugal devotion and care, and with all these, of light-hearted smiles in the midst of stress and tears.

It takes something of a reputation to endure thus for forty years. To him she was always "Her Little Serene Highness", and there is nothing in the language more moving than his bit of verse after her death; long enough after to dull the sting and ache of the parting and intensify the loneliness.

The *Hawk-Eye* came to be read not only within the limits of Burlington and Iowa as in the past, but had its circle of readers in practically every state in the Union. Its circulation increased remarkably, and the outside circulation was due largely to Mr. Burdette's columns. He came to be known as the "*Hawk-Eye* man". His work included crisp paragraphs touching upon politics and public life, each with its own peculiar and whimsical coloring; domestic sketches in which exaggeration formed the motive, and editorial articles which he wrote in a serious and altogether logical vein, and the *Hawk-Eye* became not only a source of pleasure for its humorous qualities, but a source of real power in Iowa politics. Ardently Republican himself, and bringing with him from his war experience his belief in the infallibility of Republican policy and principles, it was a genuine delight to him to enunciate that clearly and forcefully through the columns of the *Hawk-Eye*.

Then came the plunge into the public eye in the rôle of lecturer, following these years of preliminary newspaper work. Telling about it afterward, he used to smile reminiscently over the audience of compassionate reporters, and more or less uncomprehending ushers and janitors, who alone attended his maiden lecture, "The Rise and Fall of the Mustache," for it chanced that the whole world did not besiege the box office on that occasion.

The next appearance was better attended, and success came swiftly. Naturally it would, for in that deliciously humorous sketch of a human life, its trials and absurdities, and high spots and weaknesses, every normal listener found himself epitomized. The first lecture may not have been generally

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accounted a work of genius, but it came very near being all of that. Then came the abandonment of the reporter's pad and pencil for the life of the lecturer; and a very earnest and serious life it was, for all it dealt in smiles. For an ardent homelover like Mr. Burdette, it was a way of thorns, but he accepted midnight accommodation trains, poor hotels, cold halls, strange faces and all the crosses and adversities of a man who travels with a grip and umbrella in one hand and a time card in the other, with the same unchanging smile, and a steadily growing philosophy.

It was in these days, when he was a lonely wanderer among strangers, that the inner counterpart of the true humorist began to appear, that is the man of pathos. Laughter and tears lie near together, and the man who is really master of the one is generally known by his ability to command the other. Up to this time Mr. Burdette had written little but in lighter vein; indeed, almost nothing at all. Now, however, he began to touch those deeper and more vibrant chords that lie beneath the smiles that we wear on the surface. He had been through sad experiences—"waters that are deep and dark and bitter", as he phrased it—and the pathos of life and things began to creep into his pen. And the strongest proof of his mastery of the pathetic lay in the fact that he made the most out of the smallest and most ordinary things.

One time he was adrift among his lecture dates away down in Maine, in which State, probably, a Westerner feels more forlornly lost and astray than he does in any other corner of the Union, and in his loneliness he strolled down among the railroad yards, and there encountered, not an adventure, nor a romance, nor a great piece of philosophy, but a battered old box car that bore the name of the Burlington road, the C. B. Q. It was a homely and hopelessly unsentimental old thing, but it came from home! It was a dead, insensate embodiment of a soulless corporation, but it had looked on the same old scenes—the Sixth Street bridge, and the old depot, where Mort Haight and Charlie Dunbar and Abe Cleghorn held sway, and the streets where "she" used to drive; and it seemed a living link to the past, and like him, a lonely wanderer.

The letter that came back to the *Hawk-Eye* following that night was nothing but a visit with that old box car, but as I

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read proof on it, I had hard work, indeed, to see through my tears. And that was only one of many such that came to us in the course of those months.

From those days forward Mr. Burdette steadily and visibly developed. Certain crudities of diction vanished, and increasing graces grew in their stead. He became less and less a mere amuser, and more and more a philosopher. He held to the end the same good cheer, and the same smiling outlook on life, and the same sweet kindness that forebore in the days of his unphilosophic youth, to make a jest at the cost of any other man, but he brought into those more and more of the pathos of life; more of the real intent of the Creator, who gave him the mystic gift of his divine humor that earnestness should mingle with our smiles and wisdom temper our mirth. He must have lived wisely and wrought well, for in all the town of Burlington, after he had lived there for years, not a man or woman could ever be found but spoke of him lovingly and cherished, as a treasure, the memory of his acquaintance and friendship.

For some time, at the beginning of his platform career, Mr. Burdette served the *Hawk-Eye* as special correspondent; that is, while he wandered to and fro in the filling of his lecture engagements, he wrote two letters a week, which appeared in that paper over his name, and under the caption "Roaming Robert".

In this series of letters, which was continued two or three years, appeared some of the finest things he ever wrote. Much of it was mere airy persiflage, intended to amuse for the moment, and wholly trivial in its character—and still quite inimitable—but very much of it was literature, and the kind of literature that people read and then paste away in scrap-books or

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treasure in the pages of memory and often mention, with regret at their inability to repeat it.

This was the product of his brain and pen, in spite of the fact he always declared that he never set out to be "funny" or to be a "funny man", as paragraphers were known at that time. But however solemn his thoughts, he could not resist the appeal of the humorous side of almost everything that surrounded him, and the quirks of his frolicsome pen seemed sometimes to be independent of any intent. His letters then and later show this quick turning from gay to grave and from grave to gay to be one of the odd qualities of his mind, and even in times of his greatest trial and stress his letters revolved rapidly in a circle that included its arc of philosophy, humor, pathos and almost tragedy, and so rapidly the circle revolved, its qualities seemed almost to be blended in one.

Personally he was joyous and frank, made friends quickly and to those he loved he gave at once apparently to the very depth of his spirit. One of the old printers on the *Hawk-Eye* said of the instant gripping of his personality, upon first acquaintance:

We do not know what he said and we do not remember what we replied, but we do know that for the rest of the night we could think of nothing but the pleasant manner and black eyes of the famous writer.

And with men of genius and distinction in all parts of the country, the reading of the *Hawk-Eye* and Mr. Burdette's humorous columns was a genuine pleasure. Henry Ward Beecher, whom Mr. Burdette so admired in earlier days, was one of those quick to recognize the genius of the *Hawk-Eye* man and to acknowledge it with word and pen, and in a letter written while passing through Burlington on one of his lecture trips to the West said:

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Burlington is well placed upon the Mississippi. Whatever may be its future commercial prosperity, nothing can well prevent its being a delightful place of residence. Who has not heard of the Burlington *Hawk-Eye*? Before one reads a line he finds himself smiling as with an intuition of mirth in all its quaint, fantastic guises. Mr. Burdette adds to the arduous duties of the editorial chair the amenities of a lecturer, and is much sought for at home. “A prophet is not without honor save among his own countrymen” has no relevancy to him, as he is not a prophet, but a gentleman, an editor and a wit, and is best esteemed where he is most known.

The friendship of Mr. Beecher and Mr. Burdette began with the early recognition of Mr. Burdette’s quality as a humorist, and continued through the years of Mr. Beecher’s life. At his death, Mr. Burdette acknowledged his life-long obligation to the great preacher: “In the first years of my lecture work, or rather play,” he said, “his advice and good counsel made smooth many rough places.”

To quote him, when speaking of Beecher as a humorist:

“The gravest nations,” says Landor, “have been the wittiest, and in those nations some of the gravest men. In England, Swift and Addison; in Spain, Cervantes. Rabelais and La Fontaine are recorded by their countrymen to have been r  veurs. Few men have been graver than Pascal; few have been wittier.”

So Henry Ward Beecher’s humor was part and fiber of his earnestness. I think he never felt the burden of being “humorous”. He was not rendered preternaturally solemn by the dreadful consciousness that something “funny” was expected of him; and so he never seemed to pump up his jokes or his light, laughter-compelling sayings. If he did—for no man knows how much heartache a laugh may hide—the pumping was so delicately done by hidden machinery that the stream of his humor flowed as from a perennial fount of unfailing good-nature. He did not use his humor merely to create a laugh.

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It was part of his work—part of himself. It was as natural as sunshine, in the social circle, on the platform, or in the pulpit; it was bright, restful, reverent, because of its very earnestness. Behind every laugh, in lecture or sermon, lay some ambushed truth that thrust itself upon you as the laughing skirmishers that lured you to its front passed away. He was a Carlyle man, who “sang at his work, marching always to music,” so that his efforts to be useful were “uniformly joyous, a spirit all sunshine, graceful from very gladness, beautiful because bright.”

It was because his humor was so much an unconscious part of himself that one despairs of reproducing it. The task is difficult, and indeed is in most instances a failure; note the many poor stories already credited to Mr. Beecher by well-meaning narrators who have attempted to translate untranslatable “Beecherisms”. Take away the rest of the sermon, take away the company, the circumstances, the time, the argument or the conversation that called forth the jest or story—take away from it all the preacher himself, and too often you have left Hamlet out of the play.

Robert Ingersoll was another of his friends of boyhood and of young manhood, and he had always the deepest admiration for the brilliancy and oratorical genius of the great agnostic. Ingersoll was a Peorian and a friend of young Burdette not only in his school days, but afterward in his work upon the *Transcript* and *Review*, and while in his letters to the *Hawk-Eye* and in his platform addresses he joined issues frequently with the Ingersolian views and preachments, he was at the same time a student of the Ingersolian method, so far as an expression of his ideas in public speech was concerned, and he kept for many years a copy of one of Ingersoll's articles upon oratory, in which the main points were carefully marked, and had been evidently as carefully observed.

Mr. Burdette's speech, like his writing, was eloquent, possibly the eloquence that had come down from his singing Welsh ancestry. His manuscripts were written

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usually with ink, and his words flowed freely from his pen, so that his first draft, with few interlineations or erasures, was available either as newspaper or lecture platform "copy". He was a master of adjectives, and his perorations reached always a climax without hesitation, and while, when it was suggested to him that he lecture, he objected upon the ground that he was not an orator, yet it is true that he had always had a genius for story-telling.

CHAPTER V

LECTURE PLATFORM

AT the time Mr. Burdette turned to the lecture platform it was at the height of its popularity. In the days before the Civil War it had been the means whereby political orators and social propagandists were enabled to present their views. After the war this popularity increased, and its scope was greatly enlarged. Nearly every town of importance, and indeed many small towns, had their "star courses", which included lectures of the serious sort by Talmage, Wendell Phillips, Russell Conwell, Beecher, Ingersoll, or one of a great number of lesser lights, programme of music, "impersonations," stories of travel and other features of entertainment.

Humorous lecturers were not so numerous, and the lecture lists in those days were always carefully labelled "humorist" in a significant parenthesis, for the temper of the people was serious following the Civil War, and the full tide of the reaction toward humor had not yet set in. Henry W. Shaw (Josh Billings) and "Artemus" Ward had appeared with considerable success as lecturers and readers of their own humorous comment. Mark Twain had not yet found the lecture platform sufficiently alluring, although in after years he lectured at occasional intervals. The "Danbury News Man" (J. M. Bailey) made a brief appearance, but did not continue the work, and Mr. Burdette was perhaps the first of the newspaper humorists to make an appearance with a lecture, prepared for the times and tastes of the platform course, that had a continued and consistent vogue.

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His first lecture announcement ran:

“Robert J. Burdette, the Humorist of the Burlington *Hawk-Eye*, is prepared to make a limited number of engagements to lecture this season, after December 25th, 1876. Terms \$50.00. Library Associations, Literary Societies, Lecture Lyceums, etc., can secure this by addressing Robert J. Burdette, Associate Editor, *Hawk-Eye*, Burlington, Iowa.”

His first appearance was at the little town of Keokuk, in Iowa, in December, 1876, with “The Rise and Fall of the Mustache”, which came to be known in practically every state of the Union, and which he delivered nearly five thousand times, so that he said afterward, “It was only necessary to start it and it would say itself.” It was the story of the transition from the childhood of the boy to his manhood, in its humorous and pathetic phases, as Mr. Burdette’s lively imagination saw and pictured them, and he himself gives the account of its first delivery:

Keokuk—I launched my first lecture on the broad ocean of human hearts and ears in December, 1876, in Keokuk. The Baptist church was the generous phalanx that supported me and stood responsible for the lecture. A warm-hearted swarm of Keokuk’s best and kindest was the audience. I had about nine and a half pounds of manuscript on the reading desk, I think, and I read it clear through. Never missed a word, didn’t leave out a line; took me two hours and fifteen minutes.

When I got through I hadn’t enough voice left to ask for a glass of water, and my throat was so dry I couldn’t drink it when I got it. How wretchedly I felt whenever the audience laughed! I thought, “They’re laughing at me”. Maybe they were. It never occurred to me that I was reading what purported to be a humorous lecture. Occasional bursts of applause frightened me. I thought, “Well, now what?”

When I dared look up, the encouraging countenances of

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my audience reassured me and I'd pull myself together and read a little louder and a great deal faster. Oh, that was a great big, long, wide, large lecture, it was!

The record of his first lecture is tersely set down in a memorandum book of his lecture engagements that he prepared toward the end of his platform work, from records of his lecture days, which included the towns in which he had appeared, his several appearances in each, the organization for which he appeared, the title of the lecture, the humorous stories interpolated, and any incidents he might wish to recall upon the occasion of his re-visitation. In the instance of Keokuk he set the town down characteristically in bold capitals, and he notes specifically his compensation, which was one-half of \$32.00, the gross receipts for the evening.

Carefully he preserved everything that pertained to his first formal public appearance, and it is interesting, after this time, to note contemporaneous comment. The *Keokuk, Iowa, Gate City*, following his first appearance there, observed that—

Keokuk audiences are not always large, but they are pretty much always critical. The lecturer was introduced by a Dr. Cleaver, and in less than five minutes he fully ingratiated himself into the good graces of the audience. The amount of fun which he crowded into those five minutes put everybody in excellent humor for what followed. A vein of genuine humor pervaded the entire lecture, and while the grotesque and ludicrous portions of it were capital, the brilliant flights of rhetoric which the lecturer frequently indulged in were not least to be commended by any means. Whatever criticism may be made of the manner of delivery, it must be stated that the matter was excellent throughout.

And while the last sentence may be a diluted compliment of the Tom Sawyerish variety, without

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doubt his first audience was honestly in sympathy with him.

At last Mr. Burdette had found his work, and his eloquence, keen wit, tender humor and pathos equipped him for the lecture platform, a life he followed for more than a quarter of a century.

That winter he was in much demand from church and other organizations in Iowa and Illinois, and he responded to those demands as much as possible, considering his *Hawk-Eye* duties, and for a small fee.

It was inevitable that his work should come to the attention of the bureaus, and in the spring of 1877 he had his first overture from Hathaway and Pond of the Redpath Lyceum Bureau, offering him a place upon their list, and the probability of a considerable number of lecture engagements in the West in the fall and winter of 1877 and 1878. That offer he accepted, and it was in that fall and winter that he did his first bureau work.

His first book was issued in 1877, in response to a demand for the text of his lecture on "The Rise and Fall of the Mustache". It was published by the Burlington Publishing Company, in which was included Robert J. Burdette, Frank Hatton and his brother, Harry Hatton, J. L. Waite and James Putnam. The latter was the business manager of the publishing company and succeeded in pushing the sales to a considerable edition, but the expense incident to book publishing by a new and inexperienced company did not make the enterprise especially profitable, as is indicated in a letter to G. W. Carleton, the New York publisher, written by Mr. Burdette at the time:

My book is just out. I brought it out myself; Burlington Publishing Company, Robert J. Burdette, President. I



MR. BURDETTE IN 1877, AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS LECTURE CAREER

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wouldn't be president of anything again if I lived and died in unofficial obscurity. I wouldn't be President of the United States. I wouldn't publish another book myself if this great living world went down to its grave in ignorance, groping in the darkness for my book, and crying in agonizing tones, "Bring out your book!" I would say, "Book be blowed!" I am glad my book is out, though. I am glad it is going to make me so wealthy. I am glad I can take part of the money and pay off the national debt; but not on my own account. Ah no. I could stand the national debt three or four years longer.

The three years from his advent on the platform until 1880 his family remained in Burlington, where he combined his *Hawk-Eye* and lecture work, spending most of the lecture season upon the road, and the time when he was not thus engaged, in the office of the *Hawk-Eye* and with his family. These were periods of alternate exaltation and depression. Sensitive to what he felt to be his shortcomings as a public speaker, he was inclined, not infrequently, to think his work a failure.

A list of the lecturers and entertainers of those days is especially interesting after a lapse of years. It included P. T. Barnum, the showman, Henry Ward Beecher, James G. Blaine, Will Carleton, Schuyler Colfax, Rev. Robert Collyer, Edward Eggleston, the beloved James T. Fields, John B. Gough, the temperance lecturer and one of the veterans of the platform, Julia Ward Howe and Mary A. Livermore.

Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage was another of the stars of those days. Joaquin Miller, the poet of the Sierras, gave readings of his poems. Thomas Nast, the cartoonist, was included as a lecture possibility. Wendell Phillips was one of the bureau's "Big Three", which included Beecher, Phillips and Gough. Henry W. Shaw ("Josh Billings"), with Burdette, William S.

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Andrews and E. C. Dubois, were included as the humorists of the bureau list. Others listed as readers were Nella F. Brown and Mrs. Laura F. Dainty, one of the most popular of the "elocutionists" of that day, and among the entertainments is included that of Sol Smith Russell and Oliver Optic, in what was listed as "A New Duologue Entertainment". Among the old letters of Mr. Burdette is one from the beloved Sol Smith Russell, afterwards so well and affectionately known as a comedian upon the legitimate stage, asking if the *Hawk-Eye* man would not prepare him some new and original character sketches for his platform impersonations.

His engagement with the lecture bureau meant that in the future he would spend most of his time away from the *Hawk-Eye* sanctum, and while, without question, he regretted the severing of the intimate relations with the *Hawk-Eye* staff and the people of Burlington that had made his days there a source of continued interest and delight, yet there were many reasons why he felt it his duty to make the change. The returns from his platform work were much greater, naturally, than any newspaper position could pay. The acquaintance to be brought about with thousands of his auditors by the contact of the lecture platform meant a wider circulation for his published writings, and the work itself he found altogether inspiring and agreeable.

So after a discussion of the matter with his associates of the *Hawk-Eye*, it was agreed that his office work should be taken over by others, and he should have his liberty to do his lecture work, it being understood that he was to write a letter a day to the *Hawk-Eye* as his fancy might dictate. These letters covered a period of five years. Nearly always he headed them

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with a limerick and accredited it to well-known authors—Shakespeare, Oscar Wilde, Browning, Julia Ward Howe, and others, and they were so evidently incongruous that one smiled to think of the daring in the assumption. They included sometimes humorous, sometimes serious descriptions of the towns in which he lectured, of his audiences, his experiences while traveling, and frequent pen pictures of the notables of the time as he encountered them in his travels. Of his letters, the one of greatest general interest was that which contained his “Brakeman at Church”. This was a detailed account of an imagined conversation with that functionary of a train upon which he was traveling, in which was set forth his view of the different religious denominations.

It is probable that no article of newspaper philosophy and humor written in that, or possibly in any period, has been more times reproduced or has had a wider general circulation. Its popularity was immediate, and after its publication in the newspaper letter, it was republished by the *Hawk-Eye* as a pamphlet, and was distributed by tens of thousands. It was copied by practically every newspaper of more than the slightest importance in the country. It was reproduced for advertising purposes by dozens of publishers in pocket memorandum books and had a very wide circulation in this form. It was read from a hundred platforms, and few of the reading public of that generation but had an intimate knowledge of the “Brake-man at Church”.

The letter in which it first appeared was written from Lebanon, Ind., December 29, 1879, and the article itself is reproduced as perhaps the most generally interesting of his newspaper sketches:

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LEBANON, IND., Dec. 29th.

On the road once more, with Lebanon fading away in the distance, the fat passenger drumming idly on the window pane, the cross passenger sound asleep and the tall thin passenger reading "General Grant's Tour Around the World", and wondering why "Green's August Flower" should be printed above the doors of "A Buddhist Temple in Benares". To me comes the brakeman, and seating himself on the arm of the seat, says:

"I went to church yesterday."

"Yes?" I said, with that interested inflection that asks for more. "And what church did you attend?"

"Which do you guess?" he asked.

"Some union mission church?" I hazarded.

"Naw," he said, "I don't like to run on these branch roads very much. I don't often go to church, and when I do, I want to run on the main line, where your run is regular and you go on schedule time and don't have to wait on connections. I don't like to run on a branch. Good enough, but I don't like it.

"Episcopal?" I guessed.

"Limited express," he said, "all palace cars and two dollars extra for a seat; fast time and only stop at the big stations. Nice line, but too exhaustive for a brakeman. All train men in uniform, conductor's punch and lantern silver-plated, and no train boys allowed. Then the passengers are allowed to talk back at the conductor, and it makes them too free and easy. No, I couldn't stand the palace cars. Rich road, though. Don't often hear of a receiver being appointed for that line. Some mighty nice people travel on it, too."

"Universalist?" I suggested.

"Broad gauge," said the brakeman; "does too much complimentary business. Everybody travels on a pass. Conductor doesn't get a fare once in fifty miles. Stops at all flag stations and won't run into anything but a union depot. No smoking car on the train. Train orders are rather vague though, and the train men don't get along well with the passengers. No, I didn't go to the Universalist, though I know some awfully good men who run on that road."

"Presbyterian?" I asked.

"Narrow gauge, eh?" said the brakeman, "pretty track, straight as a rule; tunnel right through a mountain rather than

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go around it; spirit level grade; passengers have to show their tickets before they get on the train. Mighty strict road, but the cars are a little narrow; have to sit one in a seat and no room in the aisle to dance. Then there's no stop-over tickets allowed; got to go straight through to the station you're ticketed for, or you can't get on at all. When the car's full, no extra coaches; cars built at the shops to hold just so many and nobody else allowed on. But you don't often hear of an accident on that road. It's run right up to the rules."

"Maybe you joined the Free Thinkers," I said.

"Scrub road," said the brakeman, "dirt road-bed and no ballast; no time card and no train despatcher. All trains run wild and every engineer makes his own time, just as he pleases. Smoke if you want to; kind of a go-as-you-please road. Too many side tracks, and every switch wide open all the time, with the switchman sound asleep and the target lamp dead out. Get on as you please and get off when you want to. Don't have to show your tickets, and the conductor isn't expected to do anything but amuse the passengers. No, sir, I was offered a pass, but I don't like the line. I don't like to travel on a road that has no terminus. Do you know, sir, I asked a division superintendent where that road run to, and he said he hoped to die if he knew.

"I asked him if the general superintendent could tell me, and he said he didn't believe they had a general superintendent, and if they had, he didn't know anything more about the road than the passengers. I asked him who he reported to and he said 'nobody'. I asked a conductor who he got his orders from, and he said he didn't take orders from any living man or dead ghost. And when I asked the engineer who he got his orders from, he said he'd like to see anybody give him orders, he'd run that train to suit himself or he'd run it into the ditch.

"Now you see, sir, I'm a railroad man, and I don't care to run on a road that has no time, makes no connections, runs nowhere and has no superintendent. It may be all right, but I've railroaded too long to understand it."

"Did you try the Methodist?" I said.

"Now you're shouting," he said with some enthusiasm.

"Nice road, eh?"

"Fast time and plenty of passengers. Engines carry a power of steam, and don't you forget it; steam gauge shows a

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hundred and enough all the time. Lively road; when the conductor shouts ‘all aboard’ you can hear him to the next station. Every train lamp shines like a headlight. Stop-over checks given on all through tickets; passenger can drop off the train as often as he likes, do the station two or three days, and hop on the next revival train that comes thundering along. Good, whole-souled, companionable conductors; ain’t a road in the country where the passengers feel more at home. No passes; every passenger pays full traffic rates for his ticket. Wesleyan-house air brake on all trains, too; pretty safe road, but I didn’t ride over it yesterday.”

“Maybe you went to the Congregational church?” I said.

“Popular road,” said the brakeman, “an old road too; one of the very oldest in this country. Good road bed and comfortable cars. Well managed road, too; directors don’t interfere with division superintendent and train orders. Road’s mighty popular, but it’s pretty independent too. See, didn’t one of the division superintendents down east discontinue one of the oldest stations on this line two or three years ago? But it is a mighty pleasant road to travel on. Always has such a splendid class of passengers.”

“Perhaps you tried the Baptist?” I guessed once more.

“Ah, ha!” said the brakeman, “she’s a daisy, isn’t she? River road; beautiful curves; sweep around anything to keep close to the river, but it’s all steel rail and rock ballast, single track all the way and not a side track from the round house to the terminus. Takes heaps of water to run it through; double tanks at every station, and there isn’t an engine in the shops that can pull a pound or run a mile with less than two gauges. But it runs through a lovely country; these river roads always do; river on one side and hills on the other, and it’s a steady climb up the grade all the way till the run ends where the fountainhead of the river begins. Yes, sir, I’ll take the river road every time for a lovely trip, sure connections and good time, and no prairie dust blowing in at the windows. And yesterday when the conductor came around for the tickets with a little basket punch, I didn’t ask him to pass me, but I paid my fare like a little man—twenty-five cents for an hour’s run and a little concert by the passengers throwed in. I tell you, Pilgrim, you take the river road when you want —”

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But just here the long whistle from the engine announced a station and the brakeman hurried to the door, shouting:

"Zionsville! This train makes no stops between here and Indianapolis!"

The pictures of his contemporaries as he found them in his travels were interesting. Of an early New England trip he writes from Boston, in December of 1879:

Reached here in the morning and went to Tremont House. Delightfully old-fashioned rooms. Bathroom about the size of a drygoods box. Waiters appear to have been born in the house. Weather villainous; composed principally of east wind. Met a chilling reception at the bureau. Major Pond found me and made me feel at home. A splendid big-hearted fellow. Took tea with himself and wife, a handsome young lady, and a famous vocalist, Miss Isabel Stone. Heard Cook and Beecher lecture. Liked Joseph (Cook) much better than I expected I would. Lectured in Tremont Temple myself Dec. 4. Audience not more intelligent than, and not half as appreciative as most Western audiences. Might have been my own fault, but I was disappointed, all the same.

And a few days later he writes from New Bedford, Mass.:

A rousing big house, the best, in point of intelligence and good humor, I have faced this year. Entertained by E. C. Milliken, old-fashioned old people, from Maine. Met two sons and one daughter-in-law. Younger son, Frank D., a lawyer, just appointed Justice. Massachusetts legal contempt for Indiana reports not considered authority. Jolly reception in the Pleasant Street M. E. Church after the lecture.

This picture of Boston people as he saw them is interesting:

The first thing that strikes a western man when he lands in Boston, is the wonderful reserve of the people here. He sits down in utter desolation as he misses the cordiality and

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frankness and heartiness of western society. The Bostonian is not gruff; he is not supercilious; he is not impolite. He could not be more courteously attentive to the wants of the stranger; but his courtesy never runs to "gush". I stopped a man on the street yesterday to ask the way to a certain locality. He looked at his watch and hesitated a moment. "I can't direct you so that you could find it, if you are a stranger," he said; and in spite of my feeble protestations, he turned back and went with me, and I saw him, when he left me, again glance at his watch and walk away at a gait that indicated a feverish desire to make up for lost time. If he kept up that gait he is in San Francisco this morning.

It is a very simple incident, but it illustrates one phase of Boston character very plainly. He wasn't at all sociable or conversational during our ten minutes' walk, not a bit of it. Now, out west, we would have shaken hands with the puzzled stranger, slapped him on the back, called him "old boy", directed him as far as he could follow our instructions intelligently, and then told him when he got to that corner, anybody would tell him the rest of the way.

One doesn't get intimately and accurately acquainted with the motives and inner life of a community in three days, but I have found the people I have met here to be the most delightful of acquaintances as this reserve, that at first freezes the western man, wears away. While this reserve, I think, is a general characteristic of Boston people, it isn't universal. This afternoon Major Pond took me down to the greatest publishing house in this country, and within five minutes Mr. Houghton and Mr. Osgood made me think I was back in Burlington, and I instinctively looked out of the window to see what the South Hill woman was doing for tomorrow morning's *Hawk-Eye*.

This is the picture of him as the Boston *Globe* saw him at the time of his appearance:

A square-shouldered man, who is too large to be called diminutive, and too small to be ranked with people of average size, tiptoed in from a side door and stole bashfully across the stage at the B. Y. M. C. A. building while the president was speaking last evening. He took a seat at one end of the stage.

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and doubled his legs up under him and tried to conceal his left hand by placing his right one over it. Finding this impossible, he reversed the process with no better result.

The 400 or 500 people present looked at him and applauded, for which compliment he bowed, and then made another attempt to conceal his hands. A round, strong face, with a look that might be cynical if it were not toned down with pleasantness, dark eyes, stowed safely away under over-hanging brows, a well-arched mouth, surmounted by a moustache that showed symptoms of good care and waxing, and a heavy growth of brown hair parted on the right side, and rolling over his left ear in a fluffy bunch that amounted almost to a coil, completed a picture that was not bad to look upon.

In a letter written en route in the West he wrote:

On the way to Lincoln it was my good fortune to meet Frances Willard on the train. She is lecturing on this side of the Missouri River, and her efforts in the great work on home protection are meeting everywhere with encouraging success. She is a woman who cannot be easily discouraged, under any circumstances; she has fought a good fight, and fought it bravely, and her devotion to the cause with which her name is so thoroughly identified, has developed and strengthened all the womanly qualities which so eminently fit her for this work.

She is a brilliant, entertaining conversationalist, and how well she talked about Grant and the turned glasses at his place at the banquet table. Certainly it was a grand thing for him to do. Grander than pounding Vicksburg into dust and submission; grander than the terrible victories of the Wilderness; grander even than standing on the neck of humbled and crushed rebellion at Appomattox; it was the grandest of all victories, the victory over self, for "he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city".

And the man who saved the republic has perhaps no idea of the great good his example in the house of feasting has wrought among the men, and especially the young men, who admire Grant. In more than one instance this spring, have I heard this action quoted by some young fellow at a banquet table, as he turned his glass, "in imitation", he would say, "of Grant". And I think it is the brightest leaf in the great

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soldier's laurels; the fairest deed of the man who saved the republic.

This paragraph occurs in a New York letter:

Into the parlor car at Salamanca comes a tall man, with gray hair, a white beard and a gray mustache; there is a merry twinkle in the kindly eyes, a world of cordiality in the strong grip of the big hand, and a steady flow of quiet drollery and rare good sense and honest philosophy in the sentences that drop from the heavily bearded lips.

It is Mr. Shaw, whom the world knows better, it may be, as "Josh Billings". "I am sixty-three years old," he said to me, and I could scarcely believe it. He may have lived sixty-three years, but he is younger today than the boys who have learned to read from his "Allminax". He has lectured eighty-six nights this season, and he wants to go home, if the lecture association will let him. I watched him get off the train at Meadville, I saw the committee swallow him up in their embraces, and I thought what a happy crowd there was going to be at Meadville that night.

Of Eugene Field, in a letter written from Kansas City about 1880, he says:

There are few Press Clubs in the Republic that can, like that of Kansas City, supply its rooms with its own music, vocal, instrumental and chin, and that too of a high order of musical excellence. Eugene Field is, as his thousands of readers and admirers would naturally suppose, the life of this liveliest of fraternities—another Barnabee, and had he chosen the stage instead of the broader and higher field of journalism, he would have adorned and honored it.

Many were the references he made in his "Roaming Robert" letters to Bill Nye, but his real valuation of him was written at the time of his death in February, 1896:

Edgar Wilson Nye—so long has his name evoked laughter that a smile unconsciously plays over the lips of the listener when he is told that the Jester lies dead in his home.

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To a few of his friends was accorded the privilege of entering into the chambers of his heart, sacred to things deeper and dearer than mirth. Most men required of him mirth, and, true to his mission, his work of making the hearts of men lighter, he laughed with them, and made merry for them, whether his own heart was heavy or light. But, if one would permit him, he gave glimpses of the still, tender depths in his life, of the thoughtful, sympathetic, loving side of his character. And thus, reading between the lines of all that he wrote, having had this insight into the heart of the real, true man, deep respect and sincere love for the man mingled with your laughing admiration for the genius of the humorist.

One day when the shadows of sorrow had drifted across my own home, there came to me a letter from Nye. A long letter; tender and sympathetic; tear-blistered as though the face of a woman had bent above it; strong and sweet in its consolations—it came sobbing from the heart of the real Edgar Wilson Nye. Years ago that was, but ever since that day, whenever I have read him, I have seen the man behind the humorist; through the laughing mask of the Jester I have looked down into the tender, earnest heart, and I have known what it was that sweetened all his humor so that we laughed with the spirit of it, and no one winced or quivered under any sting from it.

God give him rest and peace. So many heavy hearts he has made light; so many dark hours he has brightened; so many cares he has laughed away from other lives; so much of wearisome toil he has cheered with his laughter—surely his epitaph will be written in sunbeams, and his rest must be in a shadowless land, where men wear no masks, because there are no troubled hearts to hide.

His first visit with Mark Twain (Samuel L. Clemens) was at the home of the great humorist at Hartford:

The pleasantest view I had of the city was from the cosy fireside in that wonderful home of Mr. S. L. Clemens, who was my host during my stay in Hartford.

I think I have never been in a home more beautifully home-like than this palace of the king of humorists. The surroundings of the house are beautiful, and its quaint architecture, broad

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East Indian porticos, the Greek patterns in mosaic in the dark-red brick walls, attract and charm the attention and good taste of the passerby, for the home, inside and out, is the perfection of exquisite taste and harmony. But with all its architectural beauty and originality, the elegance of its interior finish and decorations, the greatest charm about the house is the atmosphere of "homelikeness" that pervades it.

His admiration for Clemens increased with his years. They maintained an occasional correspondence, and he preserved among his papers the following letter touching the subject of plagiarism, a subject of interest to all authors, in which Mr. Clemens gives his unique, and at the same time sane, view:

MY DEAR BURDETTE:

You will have to ask me another. It is reasonably certain that the man stole the idea from me, but I do not remember now who I stole it from, and so you cannot properly crush those people who have groveled you until we have got all of the statistics together. Necessarily the idea was not original with me; I never had an original idea in my life, and never have met anybody that *had* had (it ain't right yet, but it is righter than it was, I reckon). Nothing is ours but our language, our phrasing. If a man takes that from me (knowingly, purposely) he is a thief. If he takes it unconsciously—snaking it out of some old secluded corner of his memory, and mistaking it for a new birth instead of a mummy—he is no thief, and no man has a case against him.

Unconscious appropriation is utterly common; it is *not* plagiarism and is no crime; but conscious appropriation, *i. e.*, plagiarism, is as rare as parricide. Of course there *are* plagiarists in the world—I am not disputing that—but bless you, they are few and far between. These notions of mine are not guesses; they are the outcome of twenty years of thought and observation upon this subject.

Religiously Mr. Burdette sought to keep a daily record of his activities while on the lecture platform, and religiously, as he admitted to himself, he failed to

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make it consecutive, so that his diaries for the years of his platform activity abounded with open spaces. The first record in his own words of his impressions while on the platform appears in his diary for 1881. On a western trip, which covered Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan and Ohio, which latter state he always held to be one of the best for the lecturer in those palmy days of the Lyceum course, he did keep a consistent record while on the platform of the places at which he spoke, the lecture delivered, the stories and illustrations used, all indicated by a cipher of his own, by which, upon his return to any place, he was able to consult his record and discover just what lecture and just what illustrations he had used before.

It was his custom to confide his impressions to ink and paper, and many are the natural human bits that he has set down, and he set down also in nearly every case his impressions of the particular audience to which he was speaking. With some audiences he was delighted, with others disappointed, admitting always that perhaps the disappointment was due to him as much as to the audience, and in some cases he insisted that he "did not know whether he liked this particular audience or not". And he was to learn, as many another public speaker, that audiences are likely to be as temperamental as artists, as is evidenced by this comment:

Audiences are just as different as individuals. You never can tell, by your audience last night, what your audience tonight will be like, nor yet the one tomorrow night. You naturally expect, if you have an alleged humorous lecture, that you will have a good-natured audience. But it doesn't follow. Last night you had a house that was one continuous ripple of merriment, that infected you with its own gayety, and made

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your talk easy for yourself, kept you up to your work, and now and then, so to speak, carried you clear off your feet. Tomorrow night you may stand before a house that would make an iceberg shiver; cold, lifeless, heavy, and you must work like a Trojan to thaw it out. Maybe you succeed. Maybe you don't. Generally, if there is any life or originality in yourself you do.

Then, sometimes, you find an audience, intelligent, bright enough, willing to be amused, apparently, but to your dismay you can't get along with them. They are not stupid or cold, but they don't just like you. It is the worst of all audiences to deal with. It is so provokingly disappointing. It promised so much and yields so little. It receives you so warmly and heartily, and then refuses to come any further with you.

You can't have revenge on such an audience. You can't even feel angry with it. You are only woefully disappointed.

Then there is another audience. The mean, stupid audience. It doesn't hiss you, but you wish it would. It doesn't intend to like you from the start. It just goes to the hall for the purpose of being as mean and mulish as it can. And it does it. It is a very rare audience. Lecturers meet with it very seldom, but a man's experience on the rostrum would be incomplete if he did not have at least one dose of it.

If you are a big man, a physical giant and a mental Hercules like Mr. Beecher or Colonel Ingersoll, you fight such an audience and pound it into goodness and appreciation. But if you are a light weight, if you are just a little fellow, with a little funny lecture, you get mad. You pause long enough to mentally remark to your audience, "Well, I'll bet you a thousand dollars you can't hate me half so much as I hate you," and then, feeling amply revenged, you go on with your chatter.

But of one audience he wrote:

I could both see and feel the change of sentiment in the audience. First thing I noticed was the change of position—a restless shifting in the chairs—people who were lolling in absolute lazy indifference, sitting up—shoulders straightening—head rising—little looks of surprise in the faces. Then the fellows in dead opposition—women and men—unbending a little—the two opposite poles coming together. Then the

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closing of the circuit—the electric spark and the explosion! As soon as I saw them beginning to sit up and *lean towards me*—I knew I had 'em, and I put on a forced draft that sent the blue steam hissing out of the cylinders where you'd have thought there were no joints!

Not only the audience before the footlights made its impression on him, but incidents behind the footlights as well.

Concerning stage setting he wrote:

A great big house crowded full of people, all in their best clothes and loveliest manner. If I had had arms as long as a wire fence I would have hugged that audience. They were just determined that I should have a good Thanksgiving day. Why, the young fellow who set the stage—and he is an artist—had gone to no end of trouble and ingenuity to make a picture of that stage that was just too charming for anything. That stage added fifty per cent to the lecture. Every now and then, when I strike a hall man who thinks any stage is good enough for a lecture, and sends me out before a well dressed and intelligent audience, and makes me talk in a minstrel kitchen scene, with a flitch of bacon and a smoked jowl hanging against the wall behind me, and a candle stuck in a bottle on the mantelpiece, and the plastering all broken from the walls, I think of that stage in the opera house at Terre Haute, and wish the manager would send the young artist who set it, around this country on a missionary tour among other hall men.

Travel by rail in those days was not the matter of luxury and comfort it is today. Trains were few, connections bad, and many a weary hour was spent in the cold and storm waiting at a junction for a delayed train, or making his pilgrimage by the "way freight". The discipline of his war training, and the health he brought out of it, stood him in good stead in these trying circumstances, where cold, exposure, irregular meals and other hardships would have put a less vigorous man upon his back in the hospital. He himself

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suffered enough through his throat, which, all his life, gave him concern, and not infrequently necessitated the omission of a lecture and medical treatment in the interval.

It was his joy always to find among his audience persons whom he had known in the boyhood days at Peoria. For instance, an entry in his diary from Kalamazoo, Mich.:

My dear old teacher, the only one I ever loved, A. D. Fitch, lives here, and he introduced me.

It is probable, however, that his disposition to idealize that with which he had been thrown in affectionate contact, colored his statement here, for certainly in his after years he evidenced the greatest affection for his beloved Ephraim Hinman.

Sometimes too he found it possible, without a too great injury to his conscientious devotion to duty, to “miss” a town. In January, 1881, he says:

I just naturally did not get to Lansing by 24 hours. Missed it awfully. Am sorry, but I am never very anxious to lecture in a State capital. Too many politicians, and your average politician does not attend lectures. He is a bird of prey and attends caucuses.

“A scattered audience” was his bête noir, because he said it was impossible to talk either seriously or humorously to that kind of a gathering, and on one occasion when an audience was distinctly “scattered”, he invited them into a corner, where an old-fashioned wood stove blazed, and sitting among them, he delivered what was half a lecture and half a fireside discourse. He was quick to see the humorous side of every incident of his lecture life. In one case he says:

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A good old sister in the audience filled me full of messages to her friends and relatives in Burlington, Vermont, and then was angry because I did not live there, but in Burlington, Iowa.

His lectures were not set, but elastic, and the length of them depended upon many circumstances. In one little Ohio town he says:

I talked two and one-half hours, because it rained so hard the people would not go out of the hall.

New England railroad connections in those days were fearful and wonderful to him, and in speaking of his failure to reach a New Hampshire village, his diary shows this entry:

To meet the connections of the fearful and wonderful New England system of railroads, it was necessary that I should drive from Bath to Brunswick after a lecture, nine miles of miserable roads. I did not do it. I have had enough experience with New England drivers to last me through the season, so I drove to bed and let Lisbon drive ahead without me. Sorry, but I cannot always drive all night to make up for railroad deficiencies.

Echoes in a lecture hall or church were one of his pet abominations. An Ohio church he refers to as "a beautiful church, very large, and containing 7,216 echoes."

The after-lecture visitations, to which in nearly every town he was subjected, were things he dreaded, although he was apparently very joyous and good natured with those who came to help him while away the midnight hour. On some occasions, however, he deliberately shut himself away, because, as he said in one entry, "I am too tired to talk more than eighteen hours a day."

Once he wrote in late May:

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I am tired to death. I have talked about six nights every week, ever since the 9th of January; I have sat up until one or two o'clock A. M. entertaining people after the lecture, and then been called for 6 o'clock trains; I have visited 32 coal mines, inspected 53 coke ovens, gone through 67 iron works, visited 93 schools, admired 118 handsome churches, gorged myself at 120 banquets, walked through 173 wagon shops and 29 pump factories; walked up and down and up and down the long streets of 198 towns and admired everything I saw; I have climbed eighty-six endless hills to gaze at eighty-six views that "Bayard Taylor said, when he was here, was far superior to anything he saw in Europe"; I have taken my nose in my hand and lounged through two glove factories, five tanneries and three fertilizer works; three weeks ago, I lectured Saturday night, sat up and talked with friends until two A. M., got up to a seven o'clock breakfast, went to church with friends at 10.30 A. M. lunched with some other friends at 12; went to Sabbath school at 2; sat in the Bible class and made a nice little speech to the children, dined with some other friends at 5, attended evening service at 7.30, went to a friend's house after service, and when we broke up at 11.30 because I had to take a train at 4.15 A. M., a good old brother shook my hand warmly and said, "Well, well, we's all glad to have met you. And you've had a good long rest here with us and you'll feel fresh for your week's work. . . ."

I don't complain a bit. All the people I have met are lovely and lovable people, and they do their best to make me have a good time, but seven good times a week for six months is too much for one man to stand.

That he remained so long in favor with the lecture bureau was due in no small degree to his determination to keep engagements no matter what it cost him in personal effort or money. I have known him to spend \$125.00 for a special train to meet a \$100.00 engagement.

The strenuousness of lecture travel is indicated by running comment in one of his letters home during a lecture trip, in which he says:

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Then at last we got off at Granville. Wrote you about a sudden change of time at Bucyrus. Hired a team, drove thirteen miles to Galion. Got there in time to catch 3.08 train for Columbus.

It had been taken off! November is the month in which the roads change to their winter arrangement, you know. Hired a special on the "Big 4"—engine and coach—to take us to Columbus—\$75. Got to Columbus on time. Train on B. & O. for Newark had changed time! Left a half hour later than the schedule said. Got supper. Got train at 6.30 P. M. Got to Newark at 7.30. Trolley to Granville—eight miles. Got there 8.10. Dressed. Shaved. Audience waiting. On platform at 8.30. Storm of applause. Committee had read my telegrams to them, and explained how hard I was trying to get there. Biggest audience Granville ever sent out to a lecture. Great success. Nearly \$100 taken at door as extra sales.

Chas. L. Williams and wife (Upland) wanted me to go home with them, but couldn't that night. Went to chapel in the morning. Talked; conducted chapel service. (Denison University.) Went to Williamses. Called on Purintons. Dinner at W.'s, manager and self. Now en route for Marlette.

His diaries are filled with intimate and humorous reflections touching men and things, and he seemed to be particularly joyous when he could set down something in the nature of a joke upon himself. Thus in one instance:

Got here at noon. Pleasant weather. Pleasant boarding-house hotel. Parlor and bedroom with—wood stove. When I opened my valise, left dress suit trousers at home. Horror! Bought a pair for \$4.50. Legs seven inches too long. Had them fixed. Wore 'em. All right. Don't just match coat and vest, but dress suit trousers cost \$16.00.

And again:

Got to bed about 1 A. M. with the pleasant prospect of sleeping till 9 if I wanted to. Later—wanted to.

There are also numerous impressions of his close and beloved personal friends, to meet whom repeatedly

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was one of the joys of his platform life. An entry from Peoria, Kan., reads:

Dined with Wm. A. White of the Emporia *Gazette*, and his business manager, Mr. Smucker, a Pennsylvanian. White's wife was away from home in Topeka, and his mother presided over the feast. He is a very engaging fellow, with the pleasant habit of laughing at a thing at broken intervals a long time after it has been said. It is pleasant in him. It would be horrible if it were imitated. Good thing for a sketch.

Of Noble Prentiss he writes:

Always an inspiration when in my audience, and he remained three delightful hours with me at Kansas City telling stories.

Hotels were different in those days, and at Paola, Kan., he notes:

Hotel delightfully old-fashioned. Landlord Grimston carves and serves at his table. Everything was delightfully home like.

At Rockwell City, Iowa, he writes of

—, the attorney who insists on remembering me most intimately when I lived in Osceola, Iowa. As I never lived there I tried to discourage him, but it was no good, so I finally remembered him as the oldest and dearest friend of my boyhood.

Writing from an Ohio town, he makes this comment:

The Baptist preacher said he had been offered double the salary he was getting, and all his expenses, to go with a show as an advance agent. I thought, after hearing him preach, that it was his solemn duty to go.

And after being "entertained" at a private home by delightful friends who kept him up until after the midnight hour, when he was exhausted from a hard day's travel and a long lecture, he wrote of the following morning:



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Dragged myself out of bed, wishing I had lied about some mysterious engagement and gone away at midnight. Wish I had run away at midnight anyhow. Couldn't. Overcoat downstairs and valise too heavy to drop out of the window.

Of a train visitor who insisted upon whiling away the hours of travel, his diary shows this entry:

She whiled away the hours to Kansas City with sprightly converse. My ears were cold and swollen and numb when we got there. I thought that once or twice death would come to my release, but he sent his excuses. He said he knew the party.

It was his custom, too, on his travels, to seek wherever he could find material for his newspaper work, and frequently he found this in an unusual way. Writing in the winter of 1890, he says:

Went out for a long walk after breakfast. Dropped in on a little United Brethren Church, attracted by the loudest preaching I have heard for a long time. (Preacher a young man.) After service we all walked through the snow and the woods to the river, where, amid the floating ice, one old woman, three young women, three little girls and one little boy were baptized, after the U. B. form, the candidates kneeling in the water and being immersed face forward three times. The young minister was in the icy water twenty-eight minutes.

His old army comrades were always a source of inspiration to him, and in an Ohio village—

— came down from Castalia as usual. Camp fire of course, and a good deal of the night consumed in the same old army talk. Long letter from —, who wants a pension because he fell off his horse, and another from an old comrade who wants one because his horse fell on him, all of which proves that men ought to learn to ride before they go into the army.

In a Pennsylvania village he had an experience, which is thus noted:

Lectured in Presbyterian Church, new and very handsome. Some opposition to a "funny lecture" in it. Good sister came

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down in the afternoon and moved the pulpit away lest I should desecrate it, so the pulpit is all right. Did not hurt me, so I am all right.

After some dozen years on the lecture platform, he reviews the hardships on the road in his own inimitable way:

The lecturer is a cricket who sings merrily during the winter, while the greedy ant, virtuous little prig, is gorging itself with the dried flies and grasshopper legs and cracker crumbs amassed by incessant toil all summer, and stored away in the ground for winter use. How much better is it to play all winter and loaf all summer! Let us see how much "fun" the ant misses by not being a cricket.

It is a model winter morning at a model country station. The committee that met the lecturer at the noon train the day preceding, took his valise, escorted him to the carriage by each elbow, and followed him to his room to see that the chair was there, and the bed, and the towel, and the block of galvanized soap, does not turn out to see him off on the train that is due to leave at 4.30 A. M. in bleak December. I admire the committee for its display of excellent judgment. I, too, lift up my voice against the early train of incense-breathing morn. The world doesn't look right in the dim gray light of super-early dawn. It turns round too fast, and in the cold and cheerless winter time it is enough to make a man with the spirit of a martyr tired. All its angles stick out; its friendships, which were eternal at 10.30 P. M., are hollow mockeries when the red-faced sun is lazily yawning his way out of bed. The lamps that burned with a mellow glow, with song and mirth in their radiance when the night was young, sputter and smoke and smell bad when the rosy-fingered hours take their places for the Daylight Gallop.

Patience is set on a hair trigger, ready to go off at a touch. There is no 'bus for the train, and the porter doesn't go to meet it. You carry your own valise, and as you stumble and grope your way along the unlighted street, through new-laid drifts of beautiful snow, you resolve for the hundredth time that when this season is over you wouldn't lecture again for a hun-

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dred dollars a minute. And when the cricket runs over a saw-buck and gets tangled up in a buggy wheel and a broken sleigh-runner in front of the wagon shop, and discovers forty yards farther on that he has lost one overshoe in the scuffle, he sighs with envy as he thinks of the industrious ant, calmly dreaming the happy hours away in his little granary, ready to eat his blankets as soon as he awakes without the trouble of lighting a fire or putting on the kettle, while he prudently saves his mattress for dinner, when he may have company.

At the station, the operator at the telegraph table is pale and tired, and so jaded with his night-long vigil that he has lost all power of speech and can only feebly articulate "I d'no" to all questions, and you believe him. You will believe anything at that unearthly hour, unless it be something reasonable. The fire is low-spirited, and when it is not watched makes desperate efforts to commit suicide by freezing itself to death. The room is cold, and so dark that no one can see the prohibitory sign "No smoking", and if their attention is called to it, they sniff contemptuously, and smoke "nigger-head" tobacco in original packages, in ancient and loud-scented pipes that would poison the deadly upas-tree. The train is late, and when the operator gets tired saying "I d'no", he slams his little wicket in our faces, and stony despair settles down upon every heart. The sun gets up high enough to look into the dismal waiting room, and with a perceptible shudder pulls a great black cloud over his head, as though he had made up his mind not to get up until the day was farther advanced and a little warmer. Only one man comes into the room who isn't cross as a janitor. He is smiling, merry, and sunny-tempered, with a cheery word of greeting that ought to melt the heart of an iceberg. The only effect it has on the crowd of sullen, half-frozen passengers is to create the impression that he has been drinking. The icy glares which fall upon the missionary of sunshine from every face soon worry him into silence and glumness, and before the train comes along we manage to make him the crossest man in the herd, and he sasses a minister of the gospel and snubs a sweet young lady with a red nose and a music roll.

The train comes jolting along at last. The cars are somewhat colder than the waiting room, but they are in motion.

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It reaches the dining station, and everybody except the lecturer has twenty minutes for breakfast. The train he is to take at this junction has been waiting forty-five minutes for the one he is on, and "pulls out" right away. He then looks at the crowd of passengers thronging into the dining room, whence issues a fragrant incense of steaming coffee and juicy steak, and thanking heaven quite audibly that he is not a glutton, as other men are, climbs wearily on the Whoa, Haw and Gee train to fast and meditate. When the train boy comes along, he asks him if he has any sandwiches. He has "all the latest popular novels, choice bound-books, Harper's for December, Century, Frank Leslie's, Ladies' Home Journal, Puckann the Judge". All good, but none edible. However, he manages to find in a dark corner of his box some Smyrna figs, taken from the haversacks of Egyptian mummies who are supposed to have died of starvation while pursuing the Israelites—figs were so old then the soldiers couldn't eat 'em—and these relics of a lost age keep life in the lecturer's body and revive hope in his heart. "Where do we dine, conductor?" "At Corduroy crossing, 2.35 P. M." Hope shrieks feebly and skips the ranch, because the lecturer changes cars at Poplar Bridge, at 11.47 A. M., fifty miles this side of Corduroy.

A numbness falls upon his frame, and sleep, sweet angel, comes to steep his senses in oblivion, but before she can score, the "talking man" comes along and sits down by his side, "to pass the time". He could pass eternity just as easily. He begins by telling his private affairs and family business to a man whom he never saw before in all his life. I never yet got on a train that I didn't hear somebody's family history. This man tells about a trip he once made to Europe; began with a letter he got from his uncle asking him to go with him; told all about the business which called his uncle to Europe, and some of the business was of such a character that if it had been my uncle, I would have lied about it, and said it was my brother Ben's uncle, and I have no brother Ben; but no; this man told me all about it; what he thought when he got the letter, how he happened to go to the post office that morning, what he said to the clerk, and what the clerk said to him; who the clerk was; how he came to marry a second time, and who his sister married; wondered if I knew his sister's husband, and when I

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said I didn't, he said he reckoned not; told the street he lived on and why he never wore a stiff hat; where he used to live and why he moved; who lived in his old house now, the sort of people they were and why he didn't like them; why he thought his wife didn't really quite appreciate him, and why he thought she was too cold and took too little interest in his business. Much more information than this would have been poured into my sleepy ears had we not reached Poplar Bridge just before I died.

That's all there is at Poplar Bridge—just the bridge and another railroad. The train comes along after three o'clock; and the lecturer has time to go to a farm house about a mile away and dine with a voracity that frightens the children. The weather moderates; it grows warmer until it begins to rain and puts road, street, and sidewalk in beautiful condition for a lecture night, snow, slush, slop, and rain. The horrible weather detains the train. At 7.45 the lecturer reaches his station, and is met by a heart-broken, despondent committee, who tell him they have had just this sort of weather for every lecture in the course with the exception of the night Colonel Sawpit was to lecture on the Battle of Bunkerloo, with stereopticon illustrations. That was the loveliest night of the winter; clear as a bell, full moon, good sleighing, special train from Grigsby station, hall jammed to the doors, and reserved seats sold clean up into the gallery; and about half-past eight o'clock a telegram came saying the colonel had missed connection at Poplar Bridge and couldn't get through.

With this cheerful greeting the lecturer climbs into the crowded 'bus, gets to the hotel, shaves himself, dresses, and is in the hall tired, dejected, and supperless in twenty minutes. The scanty audience feels the dispiriting influence of the weather and empty benches. Nobody wants to laugh; the members of the lecture association are especially downcast; the hall man, anxious lest he may not get his rent, and wisely determining to lose as little as possible, saves on his gas, and glooms the light in the hall down to the dim religious glimmer of a tallow-candle illumination. The chairman, in his dejection, forgets his introductory speech, and gets the lecturer's name wrong. Ordinarily this is a happy thing, because it makes the people laugh at the chairman and puts them into a good humor; but on this kind

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of night everybody resents it; the women look scornful and the men frown, and the prominent citizen, who thinks (and tells you in confidence that everybody else thinks) that he should have been asked to introduce the speaker, makes audible and sarcastic comment on the “bad break”, saying that “old Newelpost couldn’t tell his own name if it wasn’t printed on the programme”.

The lecturer rises, smiling without an effort—there is something irresistibly comical in the spectacle of a dispirited audience, thinly scattered about a gloomy hall, grimly listening to a humorous lecture. He postpones his opening pleasantries—there’s never any hurry about “jokes”—and when he has soothed the audience as you would coax a balky horse into forgetfulness of his worry or perplexity, he lets off the first joke. It is damp, like everything else, and is an utter failure. The next one falls flat as a presentation speech. The one after that is drawn a little too fine, and excites only bewilderment. A few more skirmishing jests are sacrificed on the clammy altars of an “off night”, and the lecturer begins to realize that unless something is done very speedily and very successfully, the battle is lost. He abandons the lecture for a moment and tells a story. As a rule, people like to hear stories when they won’t listen to anything else. The story is too old or too new, too long or too pointless, or something, and people look tired and scornful.

Then he returns to his lecture and calls up his reserves. He hurries to the front an old veteran, a joke that has rarely failed, save on nights that from the beginning of time were fore-ordained to gloomy disaster, and hurls it upon the invincible phalanx of set lips and frowning brows before him. Vain hope! The Old Guard recoils; the glittering joke of a hundred nights of light and revelry spreads its bright pinions in the smoky glare of the flickering footlights, which flame “no light, but only darkness visible,” and then, lost in the fog and cold and general dejection, falls into the slough of despond to flounder to a martyr’s death.

“O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrevocably dark, total eclipse,
Without all hope of day.

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"Of comfort no man speaks;
Let's talk of graves, of worms, and epitaphs."

Unlaughed at, unmourned, unremembered, save by its sorrowing parent, the brightest joke of all the sunny flock is lost in the common doom. Woe, then, be to the lecturer who reads, and has to wade on through his manuscript clear to the far-away end. The man who talks knows that his lecture is ended then and there. He goes on, to fill up a certain length of time, but he makes the time to suit the temper of his audience, and so his lecture is two hours short or fifty minutes long, as the case may be. He tells no more jokes on the Waterloo night. He moralizes, philosophizes, speaks "sarkastical", and tells stories, but his lecture is a funeral oration over his own failure, and that pleases the audience better, under the circumstances, than anything else. When a man is tired, and cold, and damp, and cross, and didn't want to come to the lecture anyhow, but was fairly dragged there by his wife, who was tired of being in the house all day, he doesn't want to be pleased; it is his humor to be cross and disagreeable, and the crosser you can make him feel the better he likes it, until, paradoxical as it may appear, he sometimes fairly scolds himself into a good humor.

If a man talks long enough and patiently enough, half-past nine or ten o'clock will come around some time the same night. It is Saturday night, too, and he is buoyed up by the blessed hope of a Sabbath of rest, for it has been a busy week, with every day full of long trips and every night full of lecture. He finally bows himself off the platform, followed by a feeble sputter of applause which testifies the general joy at the hour of release. The chairman detains the impatient audience long enough to announce that the speaker of the evening, having decided to remain in town for his Sunday rest, has kindly consented to preach in the First Baptist Church tomorrow morning at 10.30, and will also address the young men at the meeting of the Young Men's Christian Association at four o'clock in the afternoon, and will preach in the Zion Methodist Episcopal Church at 7.30 in the evening. The audience then escapes; the lecturer learns that there is no place open at that hour where he can get supper, whereupon he placidly lies and smil-

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ingly says he isn't hungry anyhow; a few friends, remarking that they don't suppose he can go to sleep immediately after lecturing, attend him to his room in the hotel, which they fill with tobacco smoke, while they encourage him to tell stories and give recitations until twelve o'clock, when the approach of Sunday morning breaks up the party. The lecturer crawls into bed, honestly hoping as he groans his way under the blankets that he may never awaken again if once he can get to sleep, which impious aspiration is rudely negatived by the youngest man in the party, who comes thundering at his door next morning, at 7 o'clock, bright as a lark, bringing a couple of autograph albums and a cigar six inches long, stronger than the memory of a wasted life; and what's more, he is a little hurt if the lecturer declines to sit up in bed right away and smoke it to the bitter end, which is both ends. He gets through the services of the "Rest Day", half a dozen strangers are invited to meet him at dinner, as many more at tea, after the evening service he is taken to call for "just a few minutes" upon "a most influential and charming family", that didn't find time to attend any one of his four or five public appearances, and at last he gets to bed, taking enough time from his evening prayers to write to his Lecture Bureau that next season the fee for that town is to be \$250, with \$50 extra for an afterpiece.

This is the "shady side" of lecturing, and it is no exaggeration. In fact, the hardest trips have not been drawn on for this sketch, as any lecturer can testify. I have known a lecturer to take a train immediately after his entertainment, ride all night, changing cars twice, with never a ghost of a chance for a sleeper, ride all next day, part of the time on a freight train, reach the lecture point at 8 P. M., go from the train to the hall, grimy, unshaven, supperless, faint with fatigue, giddy with fasting and loss of sleep, and then take a train at eleven o'clock the same night for "anywhere" just to avoid a "reception", because somebody would get mad if he stayed in town and declined it. There is lots of "fun" in humorous lecturing, but the lecturer doesn't have all of it himself.

While lecturing had its difficult side and its hardships, it had, as well, its element of growth and development, both more rapid than possibly Mr. Burdette him-

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self realized. Continued and intimate contact with humanity ripened and developed his naturally sympathetic and affectionate nature. In the 'early years of his newspaper work his humor was buoyant, jubilant and effervescent. Indeed, he himself admits that the humorous phase of every subject had its instant appeal to his fancy, but with travel, deeper experience and his intimate sorrow, came a more serious and reflective period in his life and work. He came to look upon humor as a means and not as an end, and he began to see that it was his mission to make people cheerful and to make hearts tender and sympathetic, rather than merely to bring the laugh to the lips of the unthinking.

The three books which he said gave him the foundation for this more serious work, were the Bible, Shakespeare and Pilgrim's Progress, and he was equally familiar with each. Each he had read and re-read until he quoted copiously and at will.

His first lecture was followed quickly by two others, "Home" and "The Pilgrimage of the Funny Man". This third lecture was a humorous and philosophical reflection upon his own observations of people. A quotation from it shows the broadening effect of human contact, and shows also his adaptation in many instances of the style of Bunyan:

Now it did not all go well with the Funny Man in his pilgrimage. Some of the sorrow in the world seemed to be infectious. Some of the wickedness in it certainly was. With varying fortunes and changing incidents he traveled on until he came to the most dangerous point in all his pilgrimage, and entered upon the Bad Lands, where for a time, he lay in the house of one Conceit, who filled his mind with evil counsels. He had been laughed at so often, that he had grown to think whatever he said was funny, and that all things were food for his humor and sarcasm.

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He lost reverence for things that all good men revere. He went past the house of mourning with laughter on his lips, and he jested while the hearse stood at his neighbor's door; he laughed at sacred things, even while there were tears in his own heart, because now he laughed and jested not because his heart was light or because he wanted to make the world brighter and men happier, but because he wanted men to laugh at him.

He forgot that the mission of laughter is beyond himself, is grander and better than self; that the man who cannot sway as with the breath of a god, the listening, still breathed multitudes by the sweeping whirlwind of resistless eloquence, who cannot, with the brain of genius and an arm of iron, save a sinking state; who cannot thrill the world with the sublimest strains of deathless song; whose lips have not been touched with the incense of poetic fire, if he can yet be an humble priest at the altars of Momus, and can waken the chambers of the heart with laughter, and wreath the altars with smiles, has still a work to do that is honest enough to demand that he be true to it, and manly and Christian in it.

In these Bad Lands, with their poisonous and infected atmosphere, the poor Funny Man, weak and flattered, forgot there are things in this world he must not laugh at; he forgot, when the temptation came to him to say a mean thing instead of a funny one, and no one but himself knows how often this temptation comes to him, that it is not funny to stab one man to make a dozen others laugh. So often he yields to this temptation, and then at night, alone, in the solemn darkness, the climbing blushes mantle his cheeks and burn his forehead, when the cruel, mean, pitiful, bitter joke comes to him like a spectre, and he sees there is a sneer on its shriveled lips instead of a smile.

Wandering to and fro in these Bad Lands, he forgot, poor, unhappy, cynical pilgrim, that we may laugh at almost everything else if we will, but sorrow is sacred. We may laugh at this man's creed and that man's superstition, but there is the one grand, broad religion of humanity that uncovers the heads of believer and scoffer alike, and fills the heart with holy reverence. He forgot that when dark-robed Sorrow lays her white hand on our brother's heart, with the same sacred touch it hushes the thoughtless laughter on our lips.

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When he laughed at death, he forgot that the lowliest grave that was ever moulded over a pine coffin in the Potter's field, shut in some hope, and love, and clinging tenderness, with its rayless gloom, and shut out some tears to fall with the chilling rain that dripped upon its mouldering clods; some sighs to mingle with the wailing winds that crept with ghostly whispers through the dank grass rustling about it; some loneliness to wander in the great black night that shut the sunlight from it.

One day he stopped to rest and take notes in a house he had often described but never entered. The wretched cottage where the gate drags out a miserable existence on one leather hinge. Where the hat of last summer does duty in the window of this winter. The house where the woman with the wart on her nose and the stocky red hair cooks liver and onions for the man with the hare-lip and a crooked eye.

Now it was so that the Funny Man went in and sat him down, and waited for the man to come home, that he might see her smite him with the rolling pin and comb his hair with the gridiron, as he had often told about when he made merry with his friends by the way. But when the man came home that night, with more smut on his face than his wife had freckles on her face, and his legs so crooked you would think he had to have his trousers cut by a grape vine or a corkscrew, there was no show for a fight, and the Funny Man was a little disappointed and very much ashamed of himself, when the ugly man threw his dusty coat on the dusty floor, and walked up to the ugly woman and bent over and looked down at the baby in her lap.

The baby! Prince of the household! The little wondering blue-eyed baby, with the dainty little fingers reaching out after everything, and the flossy white hair standing around the restless little head like a halo. The baby! That makes more laughter in the world, purer, sweeter, better laughter than the Funny Man can ever hope to rival. The baby, that laughs at its mother because she is so beautiful and at its father because he is so homely, and at its uncle because his breath is so short, and at its aunt because her teeth won't stay in.

Baby! Kings have bowed to it, and Postmaster General Key has walked the floor with 13 of them. Not all at once, however. Baby; that laughs when the angel kisses it, and smiles in its sleep when the colic is coming on strong. Baby;

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the little white-robed dot that wakes with crowing and laughter in the morning and coos itself to sleep at night. Baby, that makes your heart bigger and better and purer for the touch of its warm, dewy lips, and the soft embrace of the dimpled clinging arms. Baby, that makes you laugh every time you look at it, until —

But that night the Pilgrim noticed that the wondering eyes had a tired look in them as they lay half closed. The restless little head, crowned with the silken meshes of the flossy hair, lay still, or rocked from side to side with plaintive moans. The wee white hands had clasped themselves around the hard, rough, grimy fingers of the man, as though no hand in all the world so soft as his. The tired blue eyes, looked up for rest and sleep, into the loving faces over it. The parted lips, with quivering entreaty, in tremulous wails, that pierced the heart with anguish, told in their helpless accents, what they could not speak. How long and how silently they bent above the helpless little form; how every pleading look of the blue eyes burnt into their souls. How deep the quiet of the still soft summer night fell on the cottage, like a pall.

The heavy hours drag on, but the tired arms that all day long wrought at the murky forge, still wind themselves around the little white-robed figure as though their giant strength could hold it back from death. The speechless pain looks out of the baby eyes. The soft moans and the plaintive wails die away in a fluttering sigh. The silky tangled hair is damp, a shadow deeper than the summer night steals across the baby face, the quivering lips wreath themselves in a faint smile of relief, the tired eyes close, the wee, white baby fingers loose their clinging hold —

And the Funny Man learns there is something in this world too deeply nestled in the human heart for laughter to reach. And he rises and turns to go on in his pilgrimage, and when Sorrow, she of the melting heart and tender face, has stooped and clasped his hand, like his good Angel, she leads him away from the Bad Lands forever. And he never laughs again when the hearse is standing at his neighbor's door.

Into his writings at this time began to appear the tenderer and deeper philosophy of living, often masked

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slightly with humor, but always carrying a lesson of wholesomeness and sympathy, and in his letters and newspaper contributions we find those paragraphs beginning "My Son", each carrying its appeal to the young. This was indeed the beginning of his disposition to "preach", but he was successful in avoiding the appearance of dry moralizing and sermonizing.

In his fourth lecture on "Advice to a Young Man", which he addressed to "My Son", speaking of the power of innate leadership, he used an illustration which all old soldiers love to recall. Perhaps this particular one loses more than any other in presenting only the wording of the story, for into it he always threw his best gift of oratory, his peculiar inflections of voice and the swinging movement of arms and head that some will recall with a certain joy. But I give it here because its very words will bring back to memory some of those embellishments and recall the glory of the peroration.

One day an officer rode down the lines. He wore a yachting shirt, and a jaunty little straw hat sat on the side of his head. He was a general. The golden stars on the broad collar of the garment that fitted his form so well told his rank. His hair hung in loose ringlets down his back. Today I would have called him a dude. The word was not used then. I felt that if that man ever got mixed up in a fight his conduct would cause consternation in the ranks.

By and by a time came when we were to cross a marsh and river. The enemy were on the other side and the fire from their guns drove us back time and again from the slender bridge. Then a detachment was ordered to go further down and cross in the swamp. The cavalry mounted. We rode through the reeds and bog, across the shallow, though difficult stream, scrambled up the farther bank, and stopped in the tall reeds waist high. There all that long afternoon we waited and waited. The winds moved the vegetation around us. Afar

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off the random fire of muskets told us as well as if we saw it what was going on. It became more rapid, then louder and nearer. Occasionally a cheer went up. We knew what that meant—a sortie for a hedge or a stone wall by some gallant fellows. And finally the rumble and roll of a continued fire, punctuated by the artillery. We were ordered to mount and prepare for a charge.

I saw that long-haired leader. I felt that some one ought to catch him and be prepared to carry him off the field as soon as we got in the fight. I was ready to do it myself. I had nothing else to do. Now, over us the bombs began to burst, then came the order to ride. At the front of the column, his sword cutting bright flashes in the air as it circled over his head, rode the leader, cheering us on, and not a man—were he a coward two minutes before—that was not wildly glad to ride that day behind Custer.

The mere listing of some of the titles of his lectures will recall to mind fragments of the sayings of this “Physician of the Merry Heart”:

- “The Rise and Fall of the Mustache,”
- “Home,”
- “Pilgrimage of a Funny Man,”
- “Wild Gourds,”
- “Woman with the Broom,”
- “Dimity Government,”
- “Sawing Wood,”
- “Twice Told Tale,”
- “Handles,”
- “Rainbow Chasers.”

Wishing to give one more expression of his gospel of the merry heart, where all his other lectures, under various titles, had preached the same sweet doctrine to the human heart, he wrote and delivered in 1912 a rather fragmentary lecture on “The Laughing Animal”:

Nothing else in the world of animate and inanimate nature laughs save only man. Laughter is a human monopoly. The

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sense of humor, the faculty of laughter is man's exclusive possession. There is nothing laughable in nature. The mountain is majestic; the cañon is grand; the sea is impressive; the meadows are beautiful; the desert is lonely; the lava beds are desolate. But nothing in nature is "funny". There is no funny landscape.

Because laughter is an attribute of the noblest animal in creation, when we desire to compliment nature in the highest terms, we attribute to certain of her moods this exclusively human faculty. We say "the meadow smiles in the sunshine". And that is a compliment. Because a "smile" enhances the most radiant beauty.

Every woman in this house, no matter how wondrously beautiful she may be, is just a little bit prettier when she smiles. There, you have just proved it! I saw the charming transformation in every one of you. Listen to this description of an April day, and see how all the landscape is changed and beautified with a smile—

The children with the streamlets sing,
When April stops at last her weeping,
And every happy, growing thing,
Laughs like a babe just roused from sleeping.

Isn't that delicious—winsome—charming? It takes a brand new grandfather to appreciate that. And all the transformation is made by the little suggestion of human laughter. . . .

Laughter—the eyes are the windows of the face and the heart—"the oriel windows of the soul". But they are dark unless laughter illuminates them. Then we look at the suddenly awakened face and say, "Why, somebody lives in there!" That is right. The soul is at home and has come to the window with her candle. The whole countenance is changed like the front of the house. It doesn't light up the house to have two or three ornamental cluster lights in front of it. That is all outside. That reflects back from the windows. But the tiny candle inside—ah, that shines through them! That makes the house alive. There is joy and love and hope, and maybe sorrow and pain in that house. It is a human habitation. Nothing so transforms the countenance as a smile. An animal can't do that.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

Life could be sustained on tasteless foods and it could be lived by the cold light of reason alone. But God has given us perfumes and rainbows and orchards sweet with apple blooms and orange blossoms, just as he has given love and joy and hope and music and laughter, to ease and steady our weary feet across the burning marl on the hard days of the pilgrimage. Let us then every day thank God for the joy of living, and laugh a happy little prayer to Him in the morning and smile our thanksgiving up through starlight at the evening time. Fill our mouths with laughter.

Though the popularity of the lecture platform waned, he remained a “drawing card” always, as shown by a letter to a friend, in December, 1897:

The season has been a busy one with me. In all my twenty-one years on the platform I never had such houses. Night after night they have seated the stage, packed the standing room, and then turned people away. It’s great business.

And what was true in 1897 was equally true in 1912, and all this in spite of what one friend described as—

a thin piping voice—and when in the midst of an eloquent or humorous sentence he would swing his hands in front of him like an athlete about to compete in the high jump in the Olympic games.

Because of his voice he “never accepted any invitation to speak under the boundless canopy of heaven”. His reply to an invitation to speak at a Harvest Home of a Baptist Social Union was—

If the exercises are held in the church, I will come; if they are in the open air, I will send my blessing. If they are sort of mixed, a little one way and some of the other, well—then I will fall into harmony with the occasion—that is to say, maybe I will come, and maybe I won’t. Yours, one way or the other,
ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

While it was true that as a lecturer he had many idiosyncrasies, his voice and his manner on the rostrum

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would attract attention anywhere. It was not only what he said, but his manner of saying it that summoned smiles or tears, as he sought to master his audience and drive home a bit of hidden philosophy. He was never at a loss for a word to express himself and "a golconda of language poured out like a mountain torrent". He was not unconscious of his power, but he never abused it. However, he always felt that Fate had played a singular trick when it decreed that he should earn his daily bread—"at least the crust of it"—by appearing before an audience for their approval when he was "short of stature" (being only five feet three inches in height), "a little bent-legged feller" (the army life spent on a horse during his formative years having left that mark), and "lacking training as a speaker". He summarized it: "No voice, no presence, no gestures and little hair". But the irresistible smile, the twinkle in the eye, and the quaint humor made one forget the physical defects in the expression of the Merry Heart.

The pathos of this merry making was expressed in a letter home at the close of one of his lecture seasons:

. . . Home to Robinsnest; home to you; home to my own work; to the old den and the long silent Remington; to pick up the interrupted threads of life and its welcome duties, and to pick up the dropped stitch, and see how plain we can weave the fabric on thro' to the end of the warp and woof. So many dropped stitches I have had to pick up in this broken, faulty, knotty life of mine. So many mistakes I have made in pattern and color; so many times I have let my eyes wander from the pattern and my hands drop from the loom. That's the trouble with this life of ours, dear; it isn't a Jacquard loom—it doesn't work automatically from a set pattern. . . .

"His boys", as he was accustomed to refer to the young people, to whom he talked at every opportunity

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

in churches and in schools and colleges, were one of his chief sources of inspiration and delight. His addresses to them were intimate, friendly, full of rippling humor, but always with a basis of sound ethics, clean morals and wholesome philosophy, all the more effective for the unique manner in which they were presented.

The affection of young people for him was tender and abiding. In a letter written to invite him to attend a college class reunion some twenty-five years after he had addressed them, there is this paragraph:

There will be a hundred men at that banquet who would walk four miles with pebbles in their shoes to hear you talk. My mind dwells particularly upon your kindness one time when I wrote a lecture entitled "That Bad Boy", and asked you to look it over, and, if you could, say something good about it. You were then famous, with a following everywhere. I shall never forget the kind letter you wrote me and the beautiful words of praise you gave my modest effort. Perhaps you did not know then how much good you were doing a struggling boy just out of college, but somewhere above, with a capital A, I know there was written that day in the great white book the credit that still stands. More than a quarter of a century has gone since then, but the memory of your kindness is sweet and fragrant and will be with me till we have both passed beyond the need of earthly love and care.

That letter was written by Winthrop E. Scarritt, an attorney of New York City, and is typical of thousands that Mr. Burdette received in the course of his lifetime, each one breathing its message of affectionate recollection and gratitude.

CHAPTER VI

FRIENDSHIP WITH RILEY

HIS closest literary friendship was that with James Whitcomb Riley, the Hoosier poet, and it endured during the lifetime of both of them. Mr. Burdette's appearance upon the lecture platform preceded that of Mr. Riley by a short period, and the older man was quick to notice and make note of the genius of the younger. Mr. Burdette had already "arrived", so far as recognition and popularity were concerned. Mr. Riley was still struggling for the recognition that came to him so abundantly in the after years.

Their first personal meeting, according to Mr. Burdette's recollections, was at the home of Mr. Charles Philips, an editor at Kokomo, Indiana, and immediately there was established a bond of friendship and sympathy between them. Hitherto, they had known each other only through their published sketches. An indication of Mr. Riley's earliest familiarity with the works of Mr. Burdette is found in a letter written from Indianapolis, when Riley was with the *Journal*. Mr. Burdette had included in a letter to the *Hawk-Eye* an enthusiastic appreciation of Riley and his work, to which the Hoosier poet made his acknowledgment:

INDIANAPOLIS, Jan. 9, 1880.

DEAR MAN: Don't want to clog your time, but must hold you with my glittering pen long enough to thank you for your kindly mention of me in your Spencer letter. It was a good thing to say, and a mighty good way you said it. Years ago I said a good thing about you. You never knew it, perhaps,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

for it was when the soul o' me had been out high-lonesomin', and run up against your own--out there in Peoria, I imagine, about the time your good wife was so wisely foreshadowing the blessed future that has collared you—yea, even as I write.

Well, what I said about you started out like this:

“ ‘Twas a funny little fellow
Of the very purest type—
For he had a heart as mellow
As an apple over-ripe;
And the brightest little twinkle
When a funny thing occurred,
And the lightest little tinkle
Of a laugh you ever heard.”

And ended (just as it will end in some glorious dawn, I pray) like this:

“And I think the angels knew him,
And had gathered to await
His coming, and run to him
Through the widely-opened gate—
With their faces gleaming sunny
For his laughter-loving sake,
And thinking, ‘What a funny
Little angel he will make! ’ ”

You have done me a world of good, and for you, in return, I could run my legs off clean to the hilt, and holler God bless you every jump. And now with every intense pang of gratitude, and throe of incandescent thankfulness, believe me, I am,

Yours exactly,

J. W. RILEY.

I enclose the stuff I threatened to afflict you with. If you ever worry through 'em, tell me what you think.

J. W. R.

Mr. Burdette never missed an opportunity both by spoken or written word, to call the attention of the public, and particularly of lecture bureau committees, to Mr. Riley's evident quality. Indeed, an old letter-

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head of Mr. Riley's, used by him in the early 80's, includes at the top the text of a flattering notice from Mr. Burdette, and a letter written by him to a platform committee about the same time says:

I know Mr. Riley as a journalist, poet and lecturer, and I want you to hear him so that you may admire him as much as I do. I endorse him as I would a man at the bank. He is pure gold. I stand pledged to redeem my endorsement, for he is undoubtedly a grand fellow.

Their correspondence began following the personal meeting at Kokomo, and continued until it was closed by the last illness of Mr. Burdette in 1914. Riley realized and expressed always his debt to the encouragement and support of the older man, as indicated in a letter written from Indianapolis in 1881, in which he says:

Your letter, brief as it is, was a good thing to get, and I thank you for it with a full heart. In reply to your query as to my success, and how I like it, I answer, good. While the public is not exactly *clamoring* for me, it is not *ignoring* my great worth at least; and I am being almost daily assured by the Chicago Hathaway that I'm to be a 'big card'; and through him, too, his Boston brother is evincing a special interest just now. But I owe *you* everything, and when I am indeed prosperous I can prove me love.

Yesterday I said good-bye to poor Charlie Philips. He died the morning of the fifth. He always liked you, and made me like you, long before I shook your hand. God bless and rest him!

I am to have a few engagements East, the Boston branch writes, but an audience at "The Hub", they intimate, will cost me money probably, though I'm going to ask them to get it without if possible.

P. S. You are to be at Edinburg, near here, in a week or two, and I'm going to see you then if there's a way. Twittered there not long ago myself—to a good house too.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

Wish you could find time to write me a vagrant line or two, with an occasional “pointer” about things that I’m eternally groping after.

At the top of this letter, in Riley’s painstaking chirography, was the following limerick, evidently not included in any of his published works:

“A carpenter up in Du Chien
Who had sliced off his nose with a plien,
Simply put up his thumb
To the place ’twas cut frum
And remarked, ‘ You can’t do that agien! ’ ”

Riley’s eastern successes followed upon the insistent demand of Burdette that he let himself be known by his platform appearances to Eastern audiences, and the first appearance of the Hoosier poet in the Star Lecture Course at Philadelphia was brought about by the *Hawk-Eye* man’s insistence and assistance. Comparatively unknown in the East, it was necessary that Riley be vouched for by some one whose platform experience made his voucher altogether reliable. Mr. Burdette personally interviewed Mr. Pugh, the manager of the Philadelphia Star Course, agreeing that if Mr. Riley were given a place, he himself would take the platform with him, and would arrange with Josh Billings (Henry W. Shaw) to be one of a trio on the occasion of Riley’s appearance. Shaw opened the programme with an address, and Mr. Burdette followed with an eloquent introduction of the Hoosier poet. Mr. Riley’s success was absolute and convincing, and there was no greater joy in the heart of any one of Riley’s admirers than in that of Mr. Burdette.

Writing again from the *Journal* office in 1882, the Hoosier poet thus responded to an invitation to visit with Burdette at his suburban home at Ardmore:

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Your letter is the most gracious thing that has come to me for an age. It is ripe and mellow with all mirth and tenderness. I laugh a world of tears up in my eyes, and then cry out more; and if I could write one-half as good I'd be too selfish to ever give it away, but would keep it solely for myself, to look at and pet and fondle and fool over when all the world was dark and comfortless, and even the sunshine couldn't touch a fellow up with any pulse of warmth. But you have been more generous, and so I love you better than myself.

Your farm-talk tingles through the old "Benj. Johnson" heart till I envy you your opportunity of gathering such material as I could just now revel in and need so much. And if I only could get to you there I'd come on the wings of the cyclone, but I think the way in which you have sketched your rural environments will serve as inspiration for one other poem at least. I could enjoy country life for any length of time with you along; without such companionship, the first few months, I fear, would be just a little trying.

Here all has not been, nor is, to say delectable. The sun scorches us today—tomorrow the rain whips us into draggled ribbons, and the next day the cyclone spats us clean over the county-line, and we grab a root and pray that the next day will not find our bones bleaching on some alien strand. But "the whirligig of time" giggles right along, and *The Journal* seems to "stand in" with the racket and whizz and whirl and swirl along about level with the general havoc. I have not been as busy as I might have been, but am getting in a better state of mind, and now feel that more good, and more of it, is lurking near at hand in wait for me to catch up on.

The first page of the text of another letter is illustrated with pencil sketches setting forth the spirit of the following verse, with which it is adorned:

LITTLE JACK WISEMAN

"O kind friendth and neighborth, come lithen unto me!
I'm little Jacky Witheman, ath you can plainly thee.
I knowth all my letterth un can thay 'em upthide-down,
Un I can thpell about ath well ath any boy in town;
'Pony' ith a big word, and tho ith 'Lady', too,
Un when I get to 'Balcony' I'll be ath high ath you!"

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

Riley was rapidly coming into his own. His eastern successes had brought him a wider recognition in a literary way and the story of his growth is set forth in his inimitable fashion in the following letter:

INDIANAPOLIS, Aug. 6, '82.

DEAR BURDETTE:

I don't know of anything better than a letter from you; and if you could see me run to meet 'em when they come, and grab 'em up, and pet, and dandle 'em around, why I'm almost sure you'd think the time you spare to me not wasted after all.

But I want to *be* with you there—stirred up and mixed and blended with the coolness of the woods—the tempered warmth of the sunshine, and the happy combination of the two. Where I can chew "Star" Navy all day long and never feel the bitter pangs of heartburn and where I could wad wet natural-leaf into the bowel-cavity of a clay pipe and smoke till black in the face, still smiling blandly.

O my friend, Success is an exclusive kuss, but ever on speaking terms, he sorto' seems to like to "stand in" with "the boys", after all. Le's forget him now, and just look over the past! What do you say. Of course he's not as quick to see things as we are; but when he comes forward as he does and frankly acknowledges his error, why, of course, it's all right! It's all right! Old man! 'Sall right! By yourselves by yours! Everythinggoes!!

Some time since I saw a paragraph floating about to the effect that you had *permanently* retired from the lecture field, but am glad to see by the Bureau "prospectus" that you will still "argue". That's right—you mustn't desert me. Fact is I'd feel mighty lonesome on the road, knowing all season long that I had no prospect ahead of running across you, or your colliding with me occasionally. Wish we could strike some more of that joint business, as at Philadelphia, or do "double-business" altogether. Why wouldn't that be a good thing. 'Spose we test it a few places this season. Hathaway could arrange a few choice points—and laucks! W'at larx! Seriously, now, think of it.

Another brief note from Greenfield in 1883 indicates the tenderness of the friendship between the two men.

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Mr. Burdette and family were then living amid the beauty of a suburban Pennsylvania town, and their home was designated by the poetic fancy of the Iowa humorist as "Robin's Nest", the beauty of which was set forth in published verses, which were acknowledged in the following note:

GREENFIELD, IND., April 24, '83.

DEAR FRIEND:

Have I yet written you to say how your poem of The Robin's Nest delighted, and still continues to delight me? It is so exquisite—so blossom-like, and blessed with dews and airs and scents of happy summers and all the twittering songs therein, that it has—

—Power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And falls like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Always I think of you with gratitude, and your memory, and your Robins', is always as warm and bright and clear and pure as when—

The June skies smile
And we wing our way by "still waters" awhile
Till the path to "green pastures" leads over a stile
To a garden quiet and low. God bless us, every one!

JAMES W. RILEY.

The publication of the first volume of Riley's poems as by "Ben Johnson of Boone" brought another warm-hearted and enthusiastic commendation from Mr. Burdette's pen in the columns of the *Hawk-Eye*, and Riley wrote in August, 1883:

ROCKVILLE, IND., Aug. 16, '83.

DEAR BURDETTE:

The notice in *The Hawk-Eye* of the "Ben Johnson" poems is—like all you do—supremely good. My gratitude is like a prayer—as earnest and as honest and as pure.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

How I would like to see you, my friend, and let the world go by! But who can stop for breath, hungry as I am for the long listless afternoon of an assured living. This yearning just won't mix with poetry, or slip the ratchet of the reel of my desires, but, as you once remarked in other sense, "I am getting there," and no one, I am sure, will be gladder of it than yourself. And it will please you none the less that all the other *fixeder* literary "jours" are indirectly hollering "Come on!" The Boston fellows—and the New York, with even now the editors of magazines—and—latest of them to speak out, but bravest in prophetic utterances, Joel Chandler Harris. Forgive me even unto nine and ninety times should I so quote to you his closing paragraph: "I do not know how old you are, but you are the only verse-builder in my knowledge who has caught the true American spirit and flavor. These are distinctive, and will bring you distinction."

Now, honestly, I falter as I put it down—but he said it, and God knows how hard I am trying to believe it! The little book will go through one more edition that we know of. Wish we could have published East—but couldn't, "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow" and then we will—"won't us, Pip? And ever the best of friends." . . .

Frequently in their platform work their engagements brought them close together, and whenever it was possible they joined each other for a day or a night for an exchange of recollections, philosophy, humor, and all the joys of a sympathetic friendship, and their correspondence continued in many scribbled notes written in the intervals of lecturing, and conveying the impressions of travel. For instance, a letter from Riley in December, 1883:

Tonight I was to hear a religious lecture that impressed me, and am inclined to send you, my good friend, these lines born of it:

Out of the hitherwhere into the Yon—
The land that the Lord's love lies upon:
Where one may rely on the friends he meets,

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And the smiles that greet him along the streets.
Where the mother that left you years ago
Will lift the hands that were folded so,
And put them about you, with all the love
And tenderness you are dreaming of.

Out of the hitherwhere into the Yon—
Where all of the friends of your youth have gone:
Where the old schoolmate that laughed with you,
Will laugh again as he used to do,
Coming to meet you, with such a face
As lights like a moon the wondrous place
Where God is living—and glad to live,
Since he is the Master, and may forgive.

Out of the hitherwhere into the Yon—
Stay the hopes we are leaning on!
You, Divine, with your merciful eyes
Looking down through the far-away skies,
Smile upon us, and reach and take
Our worn souls home, for the Savior's sake.
And, so, Amen—for our all has gone
Out of the hitherwhere into the Yon.

Truly your friend,

J. W. RILEY.

On his thirty-eighth birthday Mr. Burdette wrote to Mr. Riley the sum of his faith and philosophy, in a letter altogether characteristic of the writer:

RILEY AVICK: We've read yer letther an' the pekthur on the forud end ov it, an' the papers ye sint and the pothry. It wuz all good enough to ate, mon, but the sonnet to "The Edithor" wuz the sandy pig av the litther, the pride av the pen.

My boy, tomorrow I will be 38 years old. How's that for new hair, a third crop of teeth and a cord of wood without spectacles every morning before breakfast. I'm getting there my tender Telemachus. And I'm just as happy as I was when I was weaned. Happier, my son; far happier.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

I think Jacob sized it up when he told Pharaoh, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." No man could work more days into one sentence than Jacob, when he had lots of time. "But, as I was a sayin'," he meted it out with the right measure. He said his days had been "few", when "the days of the years of his pilgrimage" had been 130 years, and he said they had been "evil", when all the evil there was in them he had brought upon himself.

God blesses us without our asking, and we bring the curses upon ourselves. Why, I look back myself, and just see how fair and bright are all the days of the years of all my pilgrimage, save where my own faults, my own follies, my own wickedness, have clouded the vistas. Take out the first 15 years, and I wouldn't live one twelve-month over again. I wouldn't go back and start again if I could. Every year is radiant with blessings, every mile is bright with God's goodness, but my own faults bristle among the flowers, and my own wretched handiwork mars and stains the fair plan of every day. And I wouldn't trust myself to go through it all again. I'm glad, glad, glad that I'm 38, with a chance to do better still before me.

I want to live to be 70, because I think I have a right to my "three score years and ten". I want my whole ration, but I don't care for any more. I have about as long to live now, as I have already lived, and I want every day of it. But when our good friend Death knocks at my door and says, "Robert, it has just struck 70 by your hour glass," I will go with him just as willingly as I ever followed the chairman of a committee.

Seventy years is enough of it. By the time we reach the half-way mile post, my boy, the songs the siren sang when we were boys sound just as sweetly to us, but we are content to lean (picture of siren) back in our comfortable arm-chairs and listen to them.

We don't go banging our tender bones among the rocks to learn the words; we are content to know the tune. The world is fairer at 40 than it is at 20, because its vistas are longer, its distances are greater, its horizon has a broader sweep. At twenty there is a short life and little experience behind us, and

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only the blank unlifted curtain of the future before us. We only see the world in retrospect, and of this blessing, the older man has the greater share.

It is a good old world, Riley; for 70 years. But that's the distance. It wouldn't roll worth a cent on a century track. I am going to take it for granted that I'll live to be 70. And I won't ask for another day. What is sent over that is "complimentary". Sent right along, you see, because I'm an old subscriber.

But it's a good, beautiful world, too; full of good people and dear friends. There are flowers and ferns and oaks and vines enough to charm the eye, and even the weeds and brambles are pretty, viewed at a distance. I am satisfied with the world and I couldn't make half so good a money, even if I had the capital and material.

July 31.

And now, on Monday morning, comes a *Journal* with your latest and one of your sweetest songs, published last Saturday. Why, my boy, I believe I will appropriate that for myself it comes in so aptly. Did you know Sunday was my birthday? Did you write that poem for me? I will believe you did, anyhow. It must be so.

Poor little Prince! He has been very sick. Got loose in the orchard and devoured many green apples, had a fever and is now convalescing slowly with a mouth full of cankers that makes all hours a burden and meal time an agony to him. But he feebly sends his love to "Mr. Riley", and wife and sister join in kindest regards for the friend whose name is often on our lips, and today, as I will be when—

Tide of raptures long withdrawn
Flow back in summer floods, and fling
Here at our feet our childhood sweet
And all the songs we used to sing.

I am

Your friend,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

A glimpse of Riley's literary activities is obtained in the following letter written in October of 1897:

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

Your delinquent friend just couldn't write you sooner than this living minute—and even now is writing breathlessly. For some months I've been, day and night, in literary overalls, drudging as never before. Last I saw you I think I told you I meant to take a long rest and also give the public one. Well, simply, I lied—though with extenuation. Out of a clear sky came up a poem no bigger than a man's hand, to start with, but it grew and grew and likewise GREW, until—behold! I am, just this instant only, emerging from its awful shadow.

Not this one alone, but countless other lesser ones—Christmas poems, ordered, as you know, in this unhallowed season—six of which I've actually built—the typewriter now "grittin'" its teeth over the last (I trust)—a dod-gasted overbearing tale in rhyme that has forced itself into nearly three hundred lines.

And yet, despite all this, I've got up in the night to read your latest—and, I think, your best—book. At home, too, the folks have fought over it—loving every wholesome word of it the dearer, since as they all insist, it is so exactly and delectably like its author. So—long ago as I should have told you—you must *now* be rejoiced to know how very happily and affectionately your book has been welcomed—even, my dear friend, as *you* would be in your inspiring person.

In November, 1897, Mr. Riley wrote:

Your inspiring hail across the spaces—
Fills me and thrills me with life divine,
 Till the purple flood
 Of my bounding blood
 Breaks into riot of bloom and bud!

There now! See what a rapturous go-devil you've let off in my midst! Tomorrow I'm to miss divine service at All Saints Church, and a Thanksgiving dinner with the Rector thereof—but have I not your sacred page with its largess of compensation for all I am denied elsewhere—by blessed reason of my not having brought along a frocktail coat—which reminds me that The Wise Purveyor, he knows. . . .

And maybe while you're wundern' who
You've fool-like lent your umbrell to
And want it—out'll pop the sun
And you'll be glad you hain't got none!

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By your list I see you've been "usin'" round about old Ind-anoplus—so I'm most earnestly hoping that you had a stop-off there—long enough to see the folks at your Lockerbie home—bless 'em for lovin' you as they do! Fact is, old feller, I believe I'm a-lovin' you just a little more and more, and gentler and gentler all the time. Is it "cause I'm a-kind o' clockin' along to'rds the dusk of things? No odds!—it's very lovely, just the same; and my Thanksgiving impromptu, all honestly and fervently reads:

"To all, each day—or blithe and gay
With summer sun, or drear and gray
With winter weather—come what may
It yet should be Thanksgiving Day."

Send us along an ahoy every chance you get.

And again, writing in 1898, Mr. Riley says:

O gentlest of my friends!

How well I know the trials of protracted work like yours now—so you must know that with you I am rejoiced that but a week or more of it intervenes between you and your heroic'ly-earned rest. So, God bless you, turn your every thought to that contemplation solely! We'll all miss you at Winona, of course; but no man-jack of us but will stoutly forgive your absence, and wish you all depths of peace and solace in your near haven of repose.

My own zest—and—vigor is not to say "Coltish", as I pause here to furtively inspect it; in fact, little "rising" of the condition of last year about this date—save that now the complications are by no means so variegated as to bedaze my pseudo-mind, nor is my carelessness physically quite so unfore-
castful (if I may coin a term); so that I am even promising myself *not* to eat *every* dainty of our lakeside hostlery; and especially do I mean to tamper coyly with their shot-tower berries and catfish-pies. I may put them in a deftly concealed hand-satchel—the bulk of them—but not in my stomach, though I die of sheer starvation under the groaning board. (Ghawd! we know why *that* board groans—don't us, Pip?)

But—if you *do* get a word to us—by our ending spread—how it would come indeed like a blessed benediction, when the

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little bench-leg poet, say, got up at just the right place and smote 'em with the unexpected glory!

The best love of the Lockerbie home with my own is here-with blent. To be so universally loved as you are surpasses all other earthly treasures—and will not that be, likewise, Heaven's best offering?

With all abiding faith and love,

JAMESY.

The illness of the Hoosier poet in 1899 brought at once a tender letter from his friend of the old days of the *Hawk-Eye* and *Journal*, to which there came a response, saying:

It's very lovely and uplifting—all you say and do. Reading your written or printed words, the yet wobbly little old invalid gets a new hold on hope and cheer, and faith to match both this world and the next. My grateful heart is wholly yours, in consequence.

Following Mr. Burdette's letter to Mr. Riley Mr. Burdette himself went to see and cheer his old Hoosier friend. The story of the meeting of those two loving and lovable souls was told by Mr. Burdette in "An Autumn Day with Riley", published in December, 1899, in which Mr. Burdette said:

"LOCKERBIE STREET

"Such a dear little street it is, nestled away
From the noise of the city and heat of the day,
In cool, shady coverts of whispering trees,
With their leaves lifted up to shake hands with the breeze,
Which in all its wide wanderings never may meet
With a resting place fairer than Lockerbie Street!"

Years ago I read the poem, by James Whitcomb Riley, of which this is the opening stanza. It has the natural, child-dancing step of his heart poems, and the name fitted in so well with the rhythm, that I thought it was merely one of Fancy's songs, with an airy habitation and a dream name. Because in those days Jamesie didn't live on Lockerbie Street, and never

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expected to pitch his tent on that pleasant city lane, which didn't belong in town at all, but which loitered too long at the edge of the meadow, and was overtaken and hemmed in by the growing city, always hungry for the pastures and the fringing woods that lie without the walls.

But in course of time the poet drifted into this bit of country that lay under the noisy pavement-waves of the restless city, like another Atlantis, and there, in the home of Major and Mrs. Holstein, found himself a dweller on the Lockerbie Street he had sung, years ago. This is his home, a handful of boys' miles away from his boyhood's home, his birthplace—Greenfield, the focus of "Poems There at Home"; the starting point for "Old Aunt Mary's"; the place where the "Old Fashioned Roses" still grow; a pleasant land of sunny memories—Greenfield, where "The Old Band" used to play—

"Sich tunes as 'John Brown's Body' and 'Sweet Alice,' don't you know;

And "The Camels is A-comin'" and 'John Anderson, My Jo';
And a dozen others of 'em—'Number Nine' and 'Number
'Leven'

Was favo-rites that fairly made a feller dream of heaven.
And when the boys 'ud saranade, I've laid so still in bed,
I've even heard the locus' blossoms droppin' on the shed,
When 'Lily Dale' er 'Hazel Dell' had sobbed and died away—
. . . I want to hear the old band play."

More than a score of years ago I spoke my piece one winter night in Spencer, Ind. While not many miles away, Mr. Riley was charming an audience in Bloomington, where is the State University and a live chapter of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity. It was a stormy night. A glare of ice covered the ground, and on this ice a rain was falling to make the slippiness slicker. It was all that the attraction of gravitation could do to keep from sliding off and joining the leonids and other loose and wandering things.

The Bloomington hall was an oddly-constructed affair. The stairway opened right in the middle of the hall, abruptly as a trap door. So, if any one came in late, he loomed up before the astonished lecturer and in the midst of the audience, like an apparition from the nether world. The poet-lecturer was getting along splendidly, and he was in the midst of some very pathetic little sketch in rhyme, about mid-evening.

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Suddenly the hasty steps of a belated season-ticket holder smote the stairway with emphatic impatience, leaping up the long flight two steps at a time. The patron shot up into view, panting and breathless, his ticket held out in his extended hand, his eager eyes divided between the poet and a rolling search for the place where his seat ought to be. In his haste he climbed the extra step—the one that wasn't there. It threw him off his balance; he tripped, stumbled, fell, and went rolling, thumping, thundering down the long stairway, clear to the bottom. A chorus of shrieks arose from the women-folk; three or four young men sprang to their feet and hurried downstairs in straggling order, to help the fallen ticket-holder, the poet paused in his lecture, and the house was silent as sepulcher. Then, half-way down the stairs, a voice, tremulous with anxious fear, called out:

“Is he alive?”

A second of silence, intense, full of strained apprehension and fear, then the answering voice came up like a rocket, thrilled with amazement:

“By George, he isn't here!”

Murmurs of surprise floated up the stairway as the rescue party hurried on down, and there was that agitated, nervous rustle in the hall, which is the way a crowd speaks without moving the lips. Presently, from out of doors, came again, in emphasized amazement, a voice from the relief expedition:

“I can't find him!”

Then the murmurs ran farther away. By and by a distant shout, mingled with laughter, came back into the hall: “Caesar's ghost! Here he is!”

And there he was, sure enough. He had rolled downstairs, out of the open doors; there he struck the ice at the foot of the doorstep, went sliding down the long walk on the water-smooth glare like a human toboggan, clear out to the edge of the square, “and if it hadn't been for the court-house fence,” said Riley, “he would have slid clear out into the street and half way to Spencer!”

Was he hurt? Nobody ever knew. He never would tell. When the relief expedition found him, he was floundering about in a little pool with an icy bottom; struggling to get on his feet, falling down with a sprawling splash twice as often as he

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got half-way up, the maddest man that ever fought against the icy ruler of the inverted year, while he pelted the night with language hot enough to thaw the North Pole, like the man—

"IN THE SMOKER"

"Well," says he,
"Now, what's yourn?" he says to me:
I chawed on—for—quite a spell—
Then I speaks up, slow and dry:
'Jes' tobacker!' I—says—I—
And you'd orto heerd 'em yell!"

That night Mr. Riley drove over to Spencer to catch a train. I came down from my room about 4 A. M., and found him at a table drawn up before a roaring grate fire, writing poetry, drying and steaming, and solacing himself with a cigar, which was evidently comforting him for all hardships past and troubles to come. We rode into Indianapolis together.

"What kind of a time did you have in Spencer?" he asked. I told him that the committee and the newspaper men kindly braved the storm rather than have the hall closed on me, and queried: "How did you get along, Jamesie?"

"Oh," he said, cheerfully, "I held the janitor spellbound for an hour and a half!"

The following narrative by Mr. Burdette typifies his descriptive genius:

A RILEY RECEPTION

The orchard lands of Long Ago!
O drowsy winds, awake, and blow
The snowy blossoms back to me
And all the buds that used to be!

Blow back the melody that slips
In lazy laughter from the lips
That marvel much if any kiss
Is sweeter than the apple's is.
Blow back the twitter of the birds—
The lisp, the twitter and the words—

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

Of merriment that found the shine
Of summer time a glorious wine
That drenched the leaves that loved it so,
In orchard lands of Long Ago!

Once upon a time, a-many years ago, Indianapolis, which worships Riley even as it loves him, was bent upon giving him a reception. They sent for Eugene Field and Edgar Wilson Nye to come and assist. The Grand Opera House was packed until people began to fall out of the windows. Purt' nigh. The programme arrangement was Nye, Field, Riley. But when the curtain rang up, Mr. Riley appeared.

He explained that he was out of his place on the programme merely to make a little announcement concerning Mr. Nye. The humorist was a victim to a hereditary affliction in regard to which he was morbidly sensitive. It was quite noticeable, and sometimes, when people laughed at the bright humor of the lecture, Mr. Nye, with his peculiar sensitiveness, thought they were laughing at this physical defect, and it humiliated and embarrassed him, even to the extent, at times, of making him forget his lines.

Mr. Riley asked the audience, therefore, out of consideration for Mr. Nye's feelings, to remain perfectly quiet during his reading, and especially to refrain from any laughter. He would add, that the affliction was merely a slight tendency to premature baldness.

Well, the audience put on a decorous, sympathetic look, when Nye came on, making his first bow to an Indianapolis congregation, bending that hairless, glistening billiard ball of a head before them. The house gasped and then most incontinently roared. When he could command silence, Nye said that he had been summoned there by telegraph—a compliment indeed, which he highly appreciated. He was glad to come. But the audience would observe as the entertainment proceeded, that while he and Mr. Field would appear together, and Mr. Riley and Mr. Field would be on the platform at the same time, he and Mr. Riley would not come on together. To explain these separate appearances of himself and "the star", he would read Mr. Riley's telegram of invitation:

"Edgar Wilson Nye—Come to Indianapolis and appear at my reception. Be sure to bring a dress suit."

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"P.S.—Don't forget the trousers. I have a pair of suspenders."

For a moment the jest hung fire. Then somebody tittered, the fuse sizzled down to the boxes, and then the gallery fell.

Riley and Nye and Field. What a trio. And today Riley stands alone, recalling in his memories of yesterday, the friends who laughed and sang with him that night.

"O, the days gone by! O, the days gone by!
The music of the laughing lip, the luster of the eye;
The childish faith in fairies, and Aladdin's magic ring—
The simple, soul-reposing, glad belief in everything;
When life was like a story, holding neither sob nor sigh,
In the golden, olden glory of the days gone by.

Happy days they were. How they bubbled over with laughter. How many times I have turned one or two hundred miles out of my way, just to get to Indianapolis for a day and a night with Riley. I met him at the door of the *Journal* office one night. "Where are you going?" he demanded. "Nowhere," I said. "Anywhere. I've just come down from La Porte to put in one campfire with you." He said he had an assignment to report a "wind fight", but he would sub-let it, which he did. The "wind fight" was an oratorical contest.

And we prowled about Indianapolis, and climbed up into newspaper offices, and invaded the rooms of fellows whom we knew, or loitered here and there by ourselves, under no pretext of hunting material, or making "character studies", or of doing anything else useful—merely filling the night with our talk, and the delight of being with each other.

"OUR KIND OF A MAN."

"The kind of a man for you and me!
He faces the world unflinchingly,
And smites, as long as the wrong resists,
With a knuckled faith and force like fists.
He lives the life he is preaching of,
And loves where most is the need of love;
His voice is clear to the deaf man's ears,
And his face sublime through the blind man's fears;

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He strikes straight out for the Right—and he
Is the kind of a man for you and me!"

And James Whitcomb Riley unconsciously describes himself. A brave, strong, patient life has been his, the inner sanctuaries of it known only to his most intimate friends. A year or two ago I read through a packet of letters written by him when he was a care-free youth of 19 or 20, maybe. They were written in his wandering days, penciled on soft tablet paper; written here and there in the resting times at this town or that, and sometimes by the roadside. They were written to a comrade of his own age.

There was no reason why the writer should not have dropped into the easy, slip-shod—sometimes slovenly manner into which so many men—about everybody except you and me—are so apt to slide when they write to each other. The English of those letters is correct, the phraseology is refined; only once or twice in the dozen letters does he use any dialect, and then it is "quoted". And for the tone and matter of the letters, they are clean and pure as a girl's. Any one of them might have been written to his mother or his sisters. That was the boy Riley, and that has been the life of the man. How gentle he is, all the world of his readers knows. How loving and loyal-hearted he is, his friends of the inner circle know. And if you want to know how a singer can be loved and honored in his own city and country, go to Indianapolis and hear them talk about Jamesie.

"Peared-like, he was more satisfied
Jes' lookin' at Jim,
And likin' him all to hisself-like, see?—
'Cause he was jes' wrapped up in him!
And over and over I mind the day
The old man came and stood round in the way
While we was drillin', a-watchin' Jim—
And down at the deepot a-hearin' him say,
‘Well, good-by, Jim;
Take keer of yourse'f!' ”

There are abundant humorous and tender passages in the many letters that passed between Burdette and

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Riley. In a fragment of a letter from Riley, for instance, is this:

You don't know the thousand friends you have here, and everywhere. Everybody loves you, and so you have full reason to be the happy man you are. God bless you always—and the gudewife and the bairn! Tell all my friends I love them and want to play side-show with 'em every day. Reed, Hilt, and all the *Journal* people send regards.

And this recollection from Burdette to Riley:

The first time I ever "met up" with Robert McIntyre I heard him preach down in Charleston, Illinois. And he quoted a stanza or two from "Out to Old Aunt Mary's". So the two of you—for you know how McIntyre *can* quote anything he loves—have been coupled in my thought ever since. And this Christmas brought me that beautiful holiday edition of the poem with my name on the dedication page. Proud? Prouder than if I'd written the poem. Sent a copy straight away to McIntyre, who is my neighbor in Los Angeles. He was born ripe, and he gets sweeter and mellower as he grows nearer to the youth of immortality.

I'm not going to try to thank you for your thought of me in such well-beloved company. I think maybe I could thank any one else for any other thing, but this, from you, spells the years backward for me in a charm that transforms all phrase of speech into loving silence. If I could stand face to face with you now, I'd only hold your hand and laugh. For if I didn't laugh I'd have to cry. And I don't look pretty when I cry.

What ambrosial nights there were on the calendar when "Ben Johnson" was alive! And there was an iron fence around the Circle, and the Undertaker's shop hard by, which was a sobering place to look into as we hied for our beds! When the day was made for pleasure and the night for fun, and we worked —Jim, when *did* we do our work in those days? But we did it—and lots of it—and people read it—and cried for more.

Come out to Sunnycrest, Comrade of Yesterday. Your room looks out over the town and up to the Sierras. And it is pleasant out here all the year round, and we'll be glad as glad

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

if only you'll come! Madame sends affectionate invitations and welcomes, and I am as ever,

Affectionately and faithfully yours,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

Closing a note to Mr. Riley in 1899:

I am, as I always have been, and down to the sunset rim of eternity I will be, your friend.

And again, ten years later, Mr. Burdette writes him:

God bless every bone in your body. Two hundred and forty-eight of them, ain't there? Every time you break one that makes another blessing for the extra piece. Whole blessing too.

Jamesy, if you don't come out here some time, we are coming to Indianapolis again. Every now and then we get hungry just for a look at you. Come out and make us a Mexican visit—that lasts till the kitchen larder and cellar are scraped to the bottom of the barrel. And if you don't like your room, we will tear that whole end of the house down and build it over on your designs.

And at the request of a boy friend of Burdette for an autograph of Riley, he sent this letter:

Here is a boy of fifteen, who says his prayers to you, "speaks" your pieces in assemblies of my church and frankly admitted that he had never read anything of mine and didn't know that I wrote anything, and your autograph would be a living blessing to him. Sit down while you think of it, and send him his halo.

Yours with the love of all the yesterdays.

From Athens, Greece, in 1901, Mr. Burdette wrote him:

Sometimes I just get plum homesick to see a line of your hand-write!

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We are enjoying this land of fact and myth, fancy and reality, history and romance, truth and fiction, song, story and deed—and I've wished a dozen times that you were here to help me see it. I've seen so many things thro' your eyes, that I've sorto got into a way of dependin' on 'em, like an old man with his specs, and find myse'f lookin' around an' sayin', "Where's them eyes o' Jim's?"

Well, where AIR they? Lookin' to'rds me, I hope.

And in the mellow light of the sunset years Mr. Burdette wrote:

Remember every day, if the hours grow long and the inaction tiresome, there are people in this home who think of you every day, and who add the "Amen" of "God bless him always" to every thought of you. It is a daily joy to me to think how our lives came together, to read between the lines often as I read your songs of friendship and hope, of love and good cheer, to recall the old days when the world was new and young, and made for us to play with. God bless and keep you always, dear friend of my yesterdays and the dearer friend of today.

Writing from Florida, after his serious illness, and after Mr. Burdette's health had broken, Mr. Riley said:

I still progress toward my usual health, but the recovery is necessarily very, very slow. Surely, therefore, I am in sympathy with your state of health, though in no wise am I persuaded of its seriousness. In some good way—strange though it may seem to us—I am assured of your happy recovery. If you could know one tithe of the universal sympathy that is yours you would be cheered and heartened as a happy boy.

When I read and read again your letter it is with smiles and tears, yet more of the smiles, thank God, than the troublosus mists. That is right and true and brave, as you ever were—hale, wholesome and sound and sweet with the old faith.

And the last letter of the Hoosier poet to his friend was written less than a month before Mr. Burdette's death, and was in acknowledgment of the printed volume of the latter's last literary work:

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

If you could know with what joy your new book has been read by our household, and with what degree of pathos we have been touched as well, I feel assured of your like delight and fervor mingling with our own. For, truly, the chronicle's performance is most satisfying. I give you, therefore, great honor and renown. The publishers here are equally enthusiastic over the work—Mrs. Burdette's part as well as your own. My fervid affection is yours and hers, together with Mrs. Holstein's greetings, and a good all-hail from you will complete my great happiness.

CHAPTER VII

BREAKING TIES

WITH the continued illness of his wife and the gradual growth of his platform and literary work, came the regretful decision that he must leave Burlington. The summer of 1879 he spent at St. John, New Brunswick, in the hope that the change of climate might be beneficial to the patient little woman who had suffered so long and so intensely, and whose health was always his first consideration.

On his return from Canada there is a paragraph in one of his letters that gives a subtle reflection of their sympathy and understanding:

Here, too, we can look across the river and see Ogdensburg, N. Y. It is the land of the free.

"It is home," says Her Little Serene Highness, softly, as we gazed from the car windows.

"It is where I pay taxes," I replied harshly.

"It is where you draw your salary," she says reproachfully, and I am rebuked to silence and try to think of something patriotic to say. Presently she says, with a wave of her brown eyes over the land we love:

"It is a beautiful land, is it not?"

"Yes," I whisper softly, "yes, it is a beautiful land."

"Well," she said cheerfully, "I have a blue-eyed baby at home who is going to be President of all that land some of these days, maybe."

I never thought of it that way before. It threw me into a brown study and for two hours I sat in silence wondering if the boy would not do something handsome for the old man when he got in.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

That her condition showed some improvement from the change is indicated by the fact that upon his return from the sea coast of Canada he was fixed in his resolution to remove permanently to the sea coast, and in the following spring we find this paragraph in the *Hawk-Eye* of May 27, 1880:

Mr. Robert J. Burdette, who has broken up house-keeping for the purpose of taking his wife to the seashore for the benefit of her health, started East with his family yesterday. They go to Peoria to spend the Sabbath, and thence to some point on the sea coast. Mrs. Burdette's health was greatly benefited by her sojourn at New Brunswick last summer, and her physicians advise her to remain near the sea for some time to come. Her health during the past winter, we regret to say, has been poor, and while hosts of warm friends will sadly miss her and her household, they will rejoice in the prospect of her restoration to health.

And the *Burlington Gazette* of May 25, 1880, in noting their departure, said:

They will be missed in the church in which Mrs. Burdette was a very active member, and in the social circle, where "Bob", with his brilliant and witty conversation was always a welcome member, but "Bob" will not be lost entirely, for his connection with the *Hawk-Eye* remains unchanged, and his sparkling letters and pungent paragraphs will continue to enliven the columns of that sheet as heretofore.

That summer they spent at Nantucket, Mass., and a characteristic letter was that written by him on August 3rd to Doctor J. H. Vincent, founder of Chautauqua, expressing his sorrow at his inability to appear before Chautauqua. It tells the story of the disappointing search for health:

You will be pleased to learn, and it will gratify the intelligent thousands at the lake when you inform them that I will not be there on the 9th. I can't do very much good in this

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world, and it occurs to me sometimes that I could do as much by keeping my mouth shut as by following my tongue's free course. I wish I had the inspiration oftener. I think if it came to me fifty times a day I would be wiser and happier. At any rate I would have fewer foolish remarks to repent of when night and penitence came on together.

If it should happen that any one might feel disappointed by my failing to talk on the 9th, I am profoundly sorry for that person's mistaken sense of disappointment; assure him that it is no novelty to hear me chatter. My flashes of silence are the brightest and rarest charms I possess. And I am not rich in them. Ah, no! I am woefully poverty-stricken. Sometimes I haven't enough to go around. Let them be thankful that they will have an opportunity of hearing me when I am quiet.

Seriously, and in all "truth and soberness", I cannot come. Mrs. Burdette's health—if the poor little sufferer's combination of aches and pains and helplessness may be designated by such a sarcastic appellation—has been steadily failing all winter, and we have come down to this sea-girt island to see if old ocean and its breezes may do what the doctors and mountains and prairies have failed to do. And here we are waiting. "Her Little Serene Highness" in utter helplessness, unable to stand alone (for years she has been unable to walk), her helpless hands folded in her lap; she must be dressed, carried about, cared for like a baby, suffering from countless pains and aches, day and night, and I cannot leave her even for a few days. No one at Chautauqua will feel the disappointment as we do, for we had planned to go there together. If she could go with me, I would be glad enough to creep to Chautauqua on my knees. Her life has been a fountain of strength to me.

In her long years I have never seen the look of pain out of her eyes, and for more than half so long I have seen her sitting in patient helplessness, and I have never heard a complaining murmur from her lips while she has served as those who only stand and wait, never questioning and never doubting the wisdom and the goodness of the Father whose hand has been laid upon her so heavily. The beautiful patience of her life has been a constant rebuke to my own impatience, and in her sufferings I have seen and known and believed the "love that knows no fear", and the faith that "knows no doubt".

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

But I am tiring the busiest man in Chautauqua with a long letter when all that he wishes to know is that I can't come and lecture as I promised I would. I would like to do two or three things that I can't. With a long apology for taking up so much of your time, and a thousand wishes for a happy and successful summer at Chautauqua, I am truly your friend,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

In the autumn of 1880 they returned from Nantucket to Philadelphia, where the invalid wife was placed in the National Surgical Institute in the hope that science and skilled care might do what change of climate had failed to accomplish. And from that as a center he made his lecture trips, returning always when there was an interval long enough between lectures to permit a trip back to Philadelphia.

The summer of 1881 they spent at St. Andrews, New Brunswick. It followed a busy winter season for him, for in a letter written just before his departure, he notes that since the 9th day of November, 1880, he had filled 134 lecture engagements and traveled 20,560 miles. He wrote the *Hawk-Eye* just before his return to the platform in the fall of that year:

I will admit right here, as a sort of postscript, that I have been a very bad, lazy boy all this fall. I haven't written any letters and I haven't tried to. I will make a free and frank confession of all my shortcomings. Ghostly *Hawk-Eye*, I accuse myself of various and numerous faults.

I accuse myself of a love of ease.

I accuse myself of a hatred for work.

I confess that I have a good voice for sleep.

I accuse myself of throwing a quart of ink and a box of pens into the Susquehanna River.

I accuse myself of wishing those were all the pens and that was all the ink in the world.

I accuse myself for spending all my postage stamps for cigars.

BREAKING TIES

I accuse myself of wanting to be cashier of a Newark National Bank for about fifteen minutes.

That is the kind of a duck I am, ghostly *Hawk-Eye*, but I promise to do better.

I promise myself that every day.

I make more promises in half an hour than I can keep in ten years.

I can't imagine where all my promises go. I can't keep them; but I am positive nobody else takes them.

A stranger may, sometimes, but he never does it again.

So no more at present.

It was in the spring of 1883 that he finally settled upon Ardmore, a suburban town not far from Philadelphia, as the ideal spot for a home, and to that place he removed his family. Of his life there, possibly the best picture is given us in a letter written by James Whitcomb Riley to the Indianapolis *Journal*, following a visit by Mr. Riley just after his Philadelphia appearance:

I am just back into the city here, after a delightful day and night with Burdette at his home in Ardmore—a quiet, lulling, pastoral little town, out of the clang and worry of the city, but still, as our managing editor might remark, in his simple and sententious way, in "close propinquity" to the metropolis, where every half hour through the day the trains go dancing in with such exact promptness and certainty that the Jester very seriously asserts that he never winds his watch up when at home. And what a very tranquil, happy, perfect little picture of a home it is!

Securely alienated from the rush and wrangle of the cars, and sitting snug within the center of a smooth square lawn, it looks, in its quaint architecture, porticos and gables, like a picturesque design in some bit of tinted worsted work that women please their cunning fingers building; and then, to carry out the simile, the trim sward has a lace-like fence to edge it, with "open-work" at either corner, where the carriage of "Her Little Serene Highness" flashes and semi-circles in and out on every sunny day.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

For in their new home Mrs. Burdette is more improved in health, and in contentment, too, than when, by travel, up to a year ago, she sought relief from her long suffering. "For this is home!" she said, glancing proudly and most fondly around the twinkling parlor, "and although I can't skurry up and down it with a dustpan and a broom, I can lean back here and leisurely devise all sorts of things to do, and have them faithfully and promptly done—since," she naively added, "being helpless myself, you know, the blessed household humors me, with such patience and good-nature, that I half believe sometimes I'm not exacting after all!" And then we all laughed, and she as heartily as any, which merriment in some odd way reminded her eccentric husband of numerous examples of her "tyranny", "submissively endured", he meekly said, "through an arid waste of wedded bliss ten years in length—twice that in breadth, and a century in circumference". But all the time the speech consumed the little wife smiled on unwaveringly, appreciating fully the perfect beauty of the fabrication, and, like the doll's dressmaker, with a sage look, back of all, suggestive of that oracle's pet phrase, "Oh, I know your tricks and your manners, my fine gentleman!"

And the Burdette home is filled with other music than the Jester's laugh. There is the piano and flute and violin—the latter, now, however, he seldom touches since his wife's affliction—she having always in "the days lang syne" accompanied his violin with the piano, and now, the once deft fingers shut in the close grip of her relentless malady, his own refuse to caper up and down the strings. But they sing together still—and her bright sister, Miss Garrett, with them—and "the Prince" as well, who, by the way, is so brimmed with melody he even sings in sleep, and all the silent beauty of his Kindergarten dreams is often filled with vocal scamperings of the "Three Blind Mice", or the staccattoed echoes of the tinklings of the hoof-tips of 'Old Kriss Kringle's' reindeer on the roof.

And again, in memory, listening to veritable specimens of all this summer melody at Ardmore, a voice of some kind sings to me like this:

Forever the birds are there,
And ever the song of the birds,
And ever the exquisite, intricate air
Of laughter and loving words;

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And ever the robin trill—
In the winter as well as the spring,
And even the nest that the white snow fills
Holds ever the birds that sing.

O, ever the birds are there!
Singing so clear and strong,
That the melody of the joy they share
Is one with the angel's song;
And the wee bird wakes in the nest
To twitter and pipe and call,
Till the world of sighs is a world unguessed,
And the world of song is all.

And the artistic talents of "the Prince" are wonderful. "Keeps his thumb parboiled turning the leaves of books for pictures," said the enthusiastic father, whose early youth, as well as the son's, must have dogs-eared many a pictured volume, as one could but surmise, seeing him deftly "set a copy" for the boy to reproduce; and, again, ushered above into the "lair" of the versatile author, one could but acknowledge the conclusive evidence of his artistic skill, in crayon, paint and pencil, as in ink.

"The lair" is a cozy corner room, a south window looking down upon "my neighbor's truck patch", of which the Jester went on to say, that, as insignificant a libel on a farm as it appeared to be, a stranger glancing at it could have no idea of how much produce the old man pulled out of the ground there annually. "And this western window," he continued, moving toward it, "gives out, you will observe, upon the back lot of the baronial demesne, and—a goat, whose unfortunate temperament you may find suggested by his being tied to the fence."

"At considerable expense," he went on, smiling, "I secured that goat, a year ago, to amuse the Prince; and later, I secured him to save the boy from an ignominious end. But—but," he continued, gravely, "let me not speak further in the presence of me childe of a subject that can but recall to him the pangs of memories better buried in the past forever!" At the conclusion of this speech the expression of the Prince's face grew dubious, and he hinged out at the door with a rebuking air that brought

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a look of genuine remorse to the father's eyes, as he hurried to bring back the truant and reinstate himself in royal favor.

On either side of the writer's desk, which occupies the center of the room, stand two home-made book cases, filled with miscellaneous works, among which the more prominent are Hawthorne, Dickens, Thackeray, Harte and Twain, Longfellow, Holmes, Hood, Keats and Tennyson. And then there is a scattering number of simply humorous versifiers, together with compilations of the odds and ends of all the American wits, from Darby down to Bill Nye, of the Boomerang. On the top shelves are heaps of curious mementoes, gifts from admiring friends, souvenirs and trifles of every conceivable kind and from all parts of the world—Indian relics, crystals, corals, shells, mosses, ores, stalactites and what-not indescribable.

And on the walls: First, a legend in Hebrew, Greek or Scandinavian—I couldn't tell; anyway some biblical quotation, traced by the skillful hand of the humorist's missionary brother, now over seas and ministering in some far orient in his chosen life-work. And near this is a life-sized portrait of Mrs. Burdette, painted a short while after her marriage, while directly over it, and trailing its silken tassels against the frame below is the old starred and scarred flag of Burdette's regiment, when long ago he stilled his boyish laughter, and went forth, with square jaws and uncurved lips and face set straight against the leaden sleet of battle, until the glad sunlight of victory broke through the clouds and gave him newer right to laugh, and lent his country life to join his merriment.

On the panels of the doors are artistically-arranged portraits of notables in his own line, fellow-editors, newspaper men, etc., with the central positions given to such heads as Bryant's, Greeley's, Weed's, Bennett's and the like.

The walls, wherever one may turn, are filled with pencil and pen sketches—some from applausive professionals in art, some from bright amateurs—all clever, keen and thoroughly appreciative of the crisp and wholesome humor of the jolly themes of their inspiration—and many of the very brightest of the lot, I was overjoyed to learn were from the pencil of a "Hoosier" artist, Miss M. C. McDonald of Camden. And so it is, I may parenthetically add, that in whatever State I find myself, I find, as well, some happy cause to "toss my ready cap in air" and shout for Indiana.

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Not the last in worth of all these sketches are many from the humorist's own conceit and skillful finish. Around the margin of the ceiling he is now painting a frieze of comic pictures of his own design, such as a kennel scene of sleeping pups, a truant fisher-boy, a howling, cowering, chained Newfoundland dog and a goat rampant on a field belligerent. But for all the bewildering fascinations about him everywhere, the charm of the presence of the presiding genius of the place is always foremost in the interest of the visitor.

Here it was, down at "the pink edge of the day" that I gave a loathful farewell to the happy house—"The Jester" trying to be serious—"The Prince" indiscriminately shaking hands with everybody, and "Her Little Serene Highness" with her patient eyes waiting upon the fuller glory of the sunset.

That winter was perhaps one of the bitterest and saddest of his experience, and yet, notwithstanding it all, he did his work for the public courageously and with apparent joy. But much of his real heart is revealed by a letter to his father written February 8, 1884:

The rain it raineth every day, and although we have no such floods as the Ohio rejoiceth in, yet the Lancaster pike is as a swamp and the streets of Ardmore are swamps. Happy is the man whose boots reach to his neck and thrice happy is he who doesn't have to go out doors at all.

We have given Robbie's goat to the parson's boys. The result is that the parson has only one night-shirt left, and it consists simply of a collar band and one sleeve. There is, about the appetite of a goat, a homely simplicity and an unostentatious taste that is charming to contemplate in this age of luxury and effeminate delicacy, and the spectacle of a hungry and not too fastidious goat, making a frugal but substantial meal off the scantily furnished clothes line of a Baptist parson, is a picture of homely comfort and domestic enjoyment upon which the poets love to dwell and which artists delight to spread upon the glowing canvas. But I digress.

Carrie is very low. She is weaker and is suffering more, than for years past. Since the first of December she has only been down stairs twice. Now, she lies in her invalid chair all

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day long in my den, where I can be near her all the time, because I have been at home a week, and may not go out to lecture any more this winter. But the sunlight of Beulah is shining on her soul, and her peace and trust is beautiful to see. We hope for returning strength with the spring time, yet the struggle just now is painful—it is terrible.

Last Sabbath afternoon, Mr. Wiley, our pastor, two of the deacons and a number of members of the Church came to Carrie's room and the ordinance of the Lord's supper was administered there. It was a scene most impressive and touching, and I cannot tell you how profoundly the patient little sufferer enjoyed the privilege of sitting at the table of the Master whom she has served so gently and lovingly, in the shadowed paths of suffering.

And now, I wish you would ask for letters of dismission from the Burlington Church for Carrie and me, to unite with the Lower Merion Baptist Church, at Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.

We have deferred this so long, because our membership with the First Church of Burlington has been and is a very tender tie, that holds us very strongly to a city and a church very dear to us. In the church to which we now say good-bye, we have met friends dearer to us than we can tell. We have formed friendships that will last beyond the grave. In our troubles, loving hearts and hands ministered to us. In all Carrie's affliction, there was a path worn from the door of the church to our own threshold and to her bedside, by the coming and going of brethren and sisters, who were brothers and sisters in name, in heart and in deed. From the pulpit and the choir, comfort of psalm and sermon have come creeping into our hearts. From the pews, voices we can never forget have plead for our strength and comfort at a throne of grace. Hands have clasped ours in the crowded aisles, with a loving and hopeful grasp that caught hold upon our hearts. So dear the old church has been and is to us, so dear all its memories and the names of our brethren and sisters there, that it is more than a passing pang for us to say good-bye, and take up the Master's work in another part of His vineyard. In all the years wherein we sat at the table of our Lord with the dear family of the old church, we can recall not one hour that is not sanctified to us by beautiful and blessed memories; not a harsh word, not a

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cold hand, not one averted look. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," all these things go to make up our memories of our connection with the Burlington Church. Always we will carry a love for it in our hearts, we will think of it when we pray, and it can never be the less dear to us, because the outward form of membership is dissolved.

But here is our home, and here is our work, and here therefore is the church with which we should walk, and labor and take counsel. And here may the prayers and love of the old friends strengthen us in the new fields, and most earnestly do we say "God bless you" as regretfully we say "Good-bye".

In his diary late in 1884 appears the following entry, as though he had desired to set down for himself his vivid recollections of Carrie's last days:

Carrie came upstairs early in December, in the first week. On Christmas I carried her downstairs to dinner. Once again I carried her down in January. She never went into the parlor after she came upstairs. Our anniversary dinner, March 4, 1884, we ate in her room. While upstairs she sat in the den all the time while I was away.

After I came home, for a few weeks she insisted on occupying the guest chamber in the morning to avoid disturbing me, but about the third or fourth week in March I persuaded her to stay in the den all the time. She never left the dear, cheery old room again until about 4 o'clock Sunday afternoon, May 11th, when she said she would have to give up and go to bed. She said good-bye to the den so tenderly and sweetly as she passed out, saying she would never see it again, and she never did. On Saturday, May 24th, Dora and I lifted her out of bed alone and for the last time. She said we lifted her so comfortably and did not hurt her at all. While her bed was being made up she admired the maples in the front yard. That night Dora slept and watched with her. Sunday night I took Dora's place, and Monday morning at 7.15 God took her.

Sunday, May 18th, in the afternoon she sang "I am a Pilgrim" with Robbie and me. About the middle of the week

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she sang one verse of it with me, but was too exhausted to sing any more until her pilgrimage closed.

It was 4 o'clock Thursday, May 29th, when the casket was placed in the vault. Tuesday, June 10th, Dea. Lee, Dr. McL., Mr. Pearce and I carried her to her bed in the lot, and at 3.45 we looked down at the pretty casket flower covered, and said good-bye. We saw her peaceful, beautiful face Monday and again Tuesday.

His subsequent life at Ardmore was simple, and he joined with affection and interest with the wholesome and home-loving folk of that little community in their social and church life. His friend, Dr. H. A. Arnold, writes of his place in the village life:

The old Lower Merion Baptist Church received Robert J. Burdette into its membership very soon after his removal to Ardmore. After a short residence in Ardmore he removed to Bryn Mawr, where proximity enabled him to enter fully into church activities. Giving of his time and ability to the various phases of home church work, he had a wider vision, saw a Macedonian field, and heard an unuttered call from Merion Square—unuttered because in our humbleness we could not hope for spiritual ministrations other than the Sunday School sessions, the after session services conducted once a month by the pastor, and the Friday evening prayer meeting. The success attending these activities emboldened us to build a very pretty stone chapel. In its tower hung a sweet-toned memorial bell, the gift of Brother Burdette.

His interest in our work grew as he became better acquainted, and we often had his very welcome presence at prayer meetings and special services; in fact his ministrations became so constant that he jokingly styled himself our pastor.

He was a most welcome speaker at our anniversary, Christmas, Easter and other special services, and occupied the pulpit so frequently that he felt thoroughly at home there, so much so that he offered himself as preacher for Sunday evening services if we desired to hold them. Gratefully accepting the magnanimous offer, regular services were instituted, and our preacher traveled many miles returning home, when on lecture

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tours, to keep his preaching appointment. Bearing us in mind, when away, he would send word by mail announcing subject and hymns selected for the services the following Sunday night.

During this time he brightened our homes many times by pastoral (?) calls. The memory of these home visitations is still fresh notwithstanding the lapse of years; and sermon notes catching the brilliant gems of thought and language are still in my possession, reminders of services wherein we all sat enraptured by his eloquence and pathos.

Without realizing it, he had entered a training school of the Father's providing, wherein he might be prepared for the greater, better work ahead, the crowning glory of his life.

In 1890 a Sunday School in Ardmore became a necessity, and in one year it outgrew its rented quarters and demanded a building of its own. To start a building fund he offered us a lecture. Notwithstanding a most unfavorable night we realized more than one hundred dollars with which to start our fund. We soon erected the building that in a few more years became the home of the First Baptist Church of Ardmore.

He was ever a friend of this new cause, and we had his encouraging presence and ministrations on numerous occasions. These labors, like those at Merion Square, were labors of love, and were requited only by gratitude and affection. All efforts looking toward remuneration were kindly, yet firmly repulsed, and the only occasion when our appreciation assumed a tangible form was at one of our Sunday School anniversaries at Merion Square, when we surprised him by the gift of a watch and chain. Tears filled his eyes as he responded in language that expressed heartfelt emotions.

In his work among us he merited the plaudit "inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me".

It was indeed an humble work, but it was the prelude to the greater work the Master had for him in the beautiful summer land of everblooming flowers, where he spent the sunset of a life full of golden deeds.

His works do follow him.

After twelve years of newspaper work with the *Hawk-Eye*, he resigned from that paper in the same

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year his wife died, 1884. In the course of his life at Ardmore he had formed newspaper and syndicate connections that made considerable demands upon his time. He worked indefatigably and consistently while at home, entering his "den" early in the morning and applying himself closely until noon or later.

He contributed to the Brooklyn *Eagle*, following the death of the brilliant humorist, Stanley Huntley, and "the Burdette letter" was a feature of the *Eagle* for many years. As usual, it was a potpourri of political comment, humorous and philosophical paragraphs, with occasional verses.

He wrote the *Hawk-Eye*, tendering his resignation, upon which the *Hawk-Eye* made this comment:

The Hawk-Eye was Mr. Burdette's opportunity. It was the avenue by which he was introduced to the American public and his genial, kindly, sparkling and unique humor was first revealed. Mr. Burdette was also the *Hawk-Eye's* most valued attaché. Through the sparkling vivacity and pure and infectious wit with which he enlivened its columns, the *Hawk-Eye* was given an 'open sesame' to thousands of homes in every state and territory of the United States, through all the provinces of Canada, in England, France and Australia.

It will not be possible, perhaps, to fully supply his place. His humor is as unique as it is innocent, as bright as it is pure; it invades every phase of human life, it colors all events, political or social, with its own radiance; it finds appreciation in every walk in life; it is enjoyed by the humblest, and is relished by the most refined; it never descends to the gross and coarse, but is always high in its moral tone, pure in its social allusions and amuses without wounding.

For several years Mr. Burdette's career has been drifting away from newspaper work and he only consented to retain his connection with the *Hawk-Eye* because of the identity of its growth with his. It is not easy for him now to say "adieu" and it is not easy for the management or his associates editorially to bid farewell to one who is remembered as the light of

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the sanctum when he was daily at his desk. From the "devil" in the composing room and the carriers in the press room to the editor-in-chief and manager, every employee or attaché yielded cordial friendship to Robert J. Burdette which will continue as personal as it was voluntary. The *Hawk-Eye* will still regard his success as its own and will take the same pride in his literary achievements as though he continued identified with its own prosperity.

Running through all his records there was always an indication of some form of religious observance of the Sabbath under all conditions, as this excerpt, written on the eve of leaving Ardmore, shows:

The last Sunday in the "den" in "Doubting Castle", we arose at eight, wearied with packing all Saturday. We did not go to church. After prayers and a page from "Morning by Morning", we sat in the den. Robbie read "Examiner Stories" and the Sunday School lessons in the *National Baptist* aloud, all other books having been taken from the den. Then we read a sermon by Spurgeon from Romans, 15, 30 to 33. In the morning we stood a while on the back porch, looked at the lawn; in the evening we chatted in the den of the possibilities of the new home.

CHAPTER VIII

ESTABLISHING ROBIN'S NEST, BRYN MAWR

THE strain of the lecture platform began to tell upon Mr. Burdette. On several occasions he declared his intention to forsake the platform for the quieter life of the country gentleman, engaged solely with literature, but often the importunities of the bureaus caused him to break his resolution.

It was but natural that he should at last wish to leave Ardmore and "Doubting Castle", which was his rather pathetic designation of the cottage in which he had seen so much of distress and sorrow, and where he had said his last good-bye to the invalid wife. He remained there until March, 1886, and early in the summer, with "Dedie" (Miss Garrett) and Robin, who was then nine years of age, he went to the Adirondacks to seek nature's best restorative. It was in that summer that he filled a church pulpit for the first time, although he had been neither licensed nor ordained as a minister. Possibly his filling of the pulpit was somewhat in self-defense, for on Sunday, June 20th, an entry in his diary reads:

Drove to the Baptist Church and heard the awfullest singing and oh! the awfullest preaching. The sermon was one of Spurgeon's greatest, but the duffer who stole it murdered it. It was terrible. We will never go again.

Evidently he reconsidered his determination, and consented himself to fill the pulpit, for on Saturday, July 10th, occurs the following entry:

Rainy morning; terrific thunderstorm last night. Tents dry as powder; rain held up a little after breakfast. We drove
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to North Creek, shopped, dined at the American, and returned home, reaching the tents at 6 P. M. Got to bed late. Stayed up after supper and wrote my two sermons.

That summer, he always insisted, was one of the most important in his life. The freedom from the responsibilities and cares of the platform, the woods and the out-of-doors, and the evident earnestness with which the neighborhood people received his ministry, led him to consider seriously the ministry as his real life's work, and it is significant that a year or so later he was licensed to preach by the little Lower Merion Church at Bryn Mawr.

There were other joys in that summer, and notable was the close companionship which always existed between him and his son. An entry in his diary in July says:

Robbie and I went a-fishing. Took 58 trout, most of them very nice ones. Robbie fell through a hole in the ground into the brook. Brooks in this country have a way of wandering around underground in most unexpected places, and the crust is so thin that anyone could fall through it anywhere.

His work for the *Eagle* occupied him for a part of the time he gave to writing, and what with the caring for his camp establishment, the making of rustic furniture, the gathering of wild strawberries, and tramping through the woods and by the brooks, it was a joyous summer in many ways. His ministry continued in the church until camp was broken in September, and at that time those to whom he had preached gathered to bid him good-bye, and to make him a substantial offering of money for his services. He took from it one silver dollar as a memento, and the balance he asked to be returned to the donors, or expended in some cause they might approve.

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His own account of the gradual change in his views with reference to humor as expressed from the platform, and what he felt to be the greater field of ministerial work, was given long afterward, and contains the picture of that summer in the mountains and the effect of that simple ministry upon his beliefs:

I have read some lasting sermons by Tom Hood and Charles Lamb and Oliver Wendell Holmes and I have seen Mr. Beecher's congregation smile, to say the least. I think Gough was a pretty good preacher, but he has made me laugh many a time. Speaking to a class of theological students, Mr. Beecher once said, replying to the question "whether it was proper to say anything in a sermon that would make people laugh?"

"Never turn aside from a laugh any more than you would from a cry. Go ahead on your Master's business, and do it well. And remember this, that every faculty in you was placed there by the dear Lord God for His service. Never try to raise a laugh for a laugh's sake, or to make merry as a piece of sensationalism when you are preaching on solemn things. But if mirth comes up naturally do not stifle it. If when you are arguing any question the thing comes upon you so that you see the point in a ludicrous light you can sometimes flash it at your audience and accomplish at a stroke what you were seeking to do by a long train of argument, and that is entirely allowable. In such a case do not attempt to suppress laughter. It is a part of the nature God gave us and which we can use in his service. When you are fighting the devil shoot him with anything."

As a matter of fact, my sermons are anything but humorous. I have far less liberty in that direction than have other preachers. If I told one funny story in the pulpit it would be magnified into a score. When I was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, in Pasadena, it was recurrently reported by some people who never went to that church that any time you went by that Presbyterian Church during the hour of service you could hear the people clapping hands and roaring with laughter at my jokes.

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There wasn't a syllable of truth in it, but such things have a sobering effect on me. I don't dare to be so funny in the pulpit as many of my ministerial brethren. And this is a grievous disappointment to some of my hearers.

My first pastorate was in the State of New York, in the summer of 1885. I was pastor of a Baptist Church, at "Pond 13", in Warren County. I was camping in the woods up in that country when I received my "call". The people came to me and said they had no pastor, would I preach for them? I would and did. It surely was a country pastorate.

I was camping on the farm of Mr. Bennett and he drove me to service, about four or five miles, I think, every Sunday. When I returned to Philadelphia, in October, they offered me most generous pay for my poor services. I kept one big silver dollar, and gave back the rest of the money. I had received from those warm-hearted people more than any money could measure.

I have been preaching ever since, a year or two, in 1891-2, as assistant pastor of the Lower Merion Baptist Church, Bryn Mawr, Pa., during the pastorate of the Rev. B. MacMacklin, now of Philadelphia. In 1888 that church licensed me to preach.

During my lecture seasons, which last from October to May and carry me all over the United States, I have always preached every Sunday so that my "one day pastorates" are scattered over this country from Maine to Texas. You might have heard me when I preached in Madison Avenue Baptist Church, New York City, some time in 1893, I think.

In fact, I don't see how you can have missed hearing me some Sunday during the last eighteen years. In March, 1898, I accepted a call as supply for the First Presbyterian Church of Pasadena, Cal., and continued as acting pastor—"stated supply", the Presbyterians call it—for a little over a year. In all that time I remained a Baptist and they continued to be Presbyterians. Nothing separated us but the baptistry. And if ever I find sweeter, more lovable people I will have to go to heaven to look for them.

At the close of that pastorate I once more resumed my lecture work, preached once or twice a week from Dan to Beer-sheba, returned home and accepted the call to the pastorate of the Temple Baptist Church, of Los Angeles.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

Receiving a questionnaire from a brother minister concerning missions, Mr. Burdette answered it very fully, by saying:

I hardly know how to answer your letter. I am a very young pastor. I was ordained less than five years ago and this is my first regular pastorate. My friends are kind enough to tell me, with charming frankness, that I have no executive ability whatever, that I am a man without methods and without system. I plead guilty to all those charges.

I attribute everything that Temple Church has done or does in all lines of Christian activity to the spirit of the prayer-meeting, which is the great, strong meeting of the church and is also conducted by its method-less pastor without any system. I would excommunicate anybody who suggested a series of prayer-meeting topics running through the year. Neither the church nor myself know longer than a week in advance what we are going to talk about and pray about at the next meeting, and not infrequently the announced topic is ignored utterly after its announcement.

I came to the church without any seminary training and without any experience in leading a church. When I was ordained someone asked one of my deacons whether his pastor knew any theology. "Oh," he said, apologetically, "he knows a little, but not enough to hurt his preaching." I had one qualification for the ministry. All my life I have been intensely fond of people, and I told the flock that if they would only love one another and their pastor, I would never ask anything else of them. They fell in with the idea, and every time the pastor asks them for money for any cause whatever, they respond cheerfully and lovingly.

When the time comes round for the annual missionary sermon, I sigh in heaviness of spirit and gird up my intellectual and spiritual loins and sit down to one of the burdens of the year, "the preparation of a missionary sermon". The other twenty-five or thirty or forty missionary sermons which I preach out of the joy and love and the hope of my heart, during the year, are never burdens to me, and they are the ones that bring the money in spite of the annual missionary sermon. I always make the "appeal" as we call it, myself, because I know

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my people better and if I am not to hurt anybody's feelings I know when to stop. So many times, when I have been an onlooker in other churches, I have seen the dollars fall out of the basket by the hundred, scooped out by the fatal "one word more" and "another thought".

The Temple is a missionary church, ardently, enthusiastically so. I have observed as each cause is presented that it is considered "the most vitally important of all missionary causes", and it is always a great joy to me to find that we are invariably disappointed with the smallness of our offering. This makes us hopeful and zealous for the next year.

If I have not conveyed to you in this letter how little I know, say so, and I will write a longer one which will convince you that I know less than nothing.

With pleasant memories of good old days and dear old friends, of whom you are always One (with a capital O).

Affectionately yours,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

Again Mr. Burdette wrote:

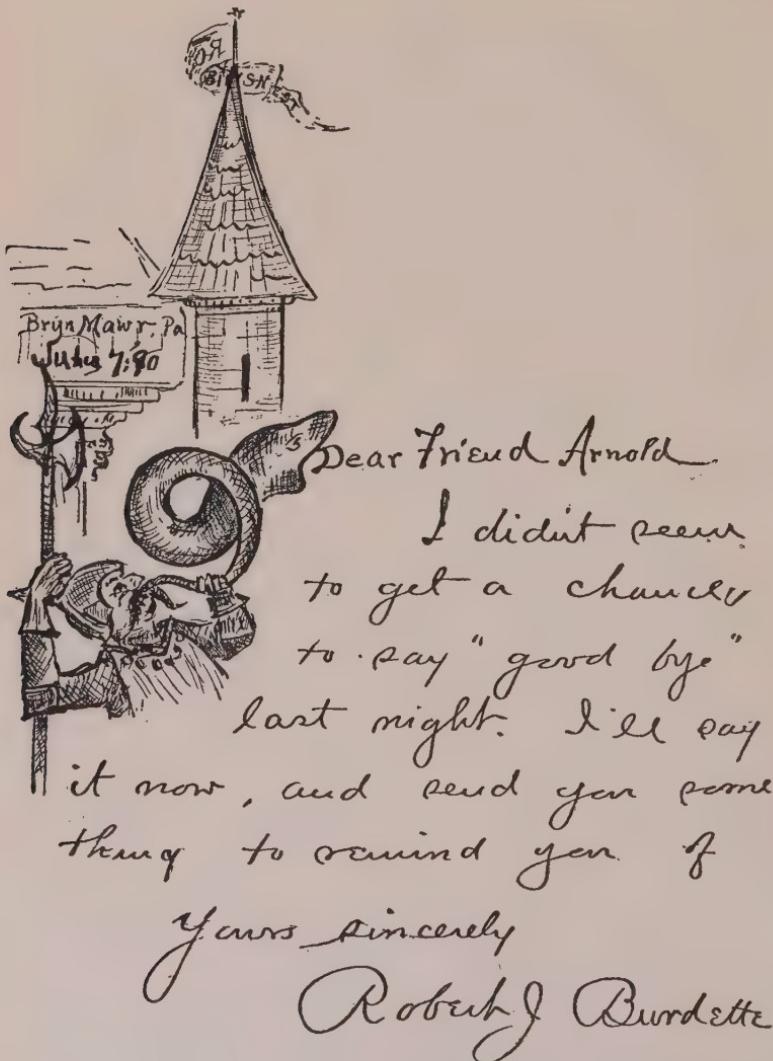
To return to the question, "How does it feel to turn from humorist to preacher?" Well, the transition has been so gradual, extending over a period of eighteen years of preaching and writing and lecturing, that the shock isn't very apparent. Besides, it has been up hill all the way.

I have seen it stated that I "wearied of the strenuous life of the lecture field and sought ease in the pastorate". Well, I have tried both. If I want an easy, lazy time I would continue to roam around the country with half a dozen lectures, each one so old that it will say itself, after you get it started, and change my audience every day.

Intellectually, popular lecturing is the laziest occupation on earth, next after acting, of course. But to go into the pastorate, to face two fresh sermons every week, with all manner of unexpected addresses coming in to fill up the time, in this day of intellectual activity and alertness, when the congregation demands that every sermon shall be the best, the man who seeks the pastorate for a vacation will find far more quiet and ease and meditative restfulness in falling down stairs with a kitchen stove or dodging automobiles on racing day.

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Upon his return from the sojourn in the Adirondacks there were intervals of boarding, lecturing and house-



A CHARACTERISTIC "GOOD-BYE" FROM ROBERT J. BURDETTE

hunting, for the atmosphere of "Doubting Castle", with its environment of reflection, was depressing to
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him, and in the following year he settled in the adjoining village of Bryn Mawr, where for more than ten years he made his home, the house in which he lived being affectionately designated as "Robin's Nest".

From here, during those days, he made his pilgrimages in the lecture season, and here he did his literary work and entered again into the life of the community. He made his first literary connection there with Edward W. Bok, then at the head of the Bok Syndicate Press, and later editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*, and he went with Bok from the columns of the syndicate occasionally into the columns of the *Ladies Home Journal*.

A letter early in their acquaintance replying to a request from Mr. Bok for copy is typical:

I have read your letter with great pain, and serious concern. I am grieved to see that you at your early age, are becoming avaricious. Oh, Edward, the love of money is one of the roots of evil, and I mourn to see a young man begin to root early. Oh, conquer this measureless, grasping greed that is absorbing your young life. Do not want all the money there is going; let me have a scoop at it now and then.

Well, I'll tell you; I am not greedy myself; I only want all I can get. I'll go you on your proposition; \$40 a week for me (and Jay Gould's income for you) and I will write for the *Eagle* just as at present, but no more; and will write for no other newspapers, save through your management; and will send you anywhere from 2500 to 4000 words a week, in the form of letters or sketches as you wish; "was you thinkin" at all of poetry? It would come dearer, for when a person comes to grind off poetry night after night, it is but right he should expect to be paid for its weakening effect on the mind. But not being a regular poetry professional, I should be loath to engage myself for that; and therefore when I drop into poetry, I should ask to be considered "so fur in the light of a friend".

Again warning you to conquer the growing spirit of avarice, which I fear is marking you for its own, dear Edward, I am.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

In this unusual form Mr. Burdette once sent an invitation to Mr. Quimby to visit him:

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

July 4th, 1894.

When, in the course of Human Events, it becomes necessary for the people of the United States to smell gunpowder and burning paper and punk and dust all the day long; to catch rocket sticks in their eyes, to step on exploding torpedoes, to dodge runaway horses, to trail after processions, to listen to inaudible orations, and to perform various acts of martyrdom to show their love of country, a decent respect for their own comfort requires that they should declare their love of a country by fleeing to the country;

We hold that all men are created tolerably equal; that they are endowed with certain inalienable rights, each of which carries with it its complemental left; that certain specified rights have descended to and should be enjoyed by the Quimby family especially, among which is the Right and Duty—

To board certain street cars and railway trains as may best suit their convenience at an early hour on the morning of July Fourth, A. D. 1894, and proceed with all careful diligence to the Suburban Station of Bryn Mawr, there to rendezvous at the habitation of one or two Robert J. Burdette, senior and junior, and Miss Dora H. Garrett, on Penn Street, known on old maps as Fisher's Road, there to possess themselves of the lawn, the piazza, and the castle, from turret to foundation stone, until the shades of night shall wrap the globe in three-ply darkness.

See that you fail not at your peril.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

In June, 1891, not long after the arrival of "Dappy", as he affectionately called his father, he wrote to his sister Mollie:

The weather is cool. Father is greatly depressed; he has had a hen on 13 duck eggs for about a month or less, and at last, with a great flourish of cackling trumpets from all the other denizens of Crocus Hall, and much dubious clucking on the

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part of the astonished step-mother, she has come off with *one* (1) to wit, one duck. He seems kind of lost among the chicks, and goes around whistling through his nose in a shrill and lonesome manner. Truly, when a hen suspends publication of diurnal eggs and goes into retirement on a secluded nest in a close and ill-ventilated apartment for single hens, she knows not what that day three weeks may bring forth.

We are all in average health. Father is rapidly becoming acquainted in Bryn Mawr. He knows everybody in the village by sight and name. At first this might seem incredible to you, but the mystery is made somewhat clearer when you are informed, what you have possibly surmised, that he bows politely and speaks courteously to everybody, which accounts for the slight acquaintance, and calls everybody Fisher, except those whom he accosts as "Richards", and a very few select acquaintances—25 or 30—who are graven on the tablets of his friendship as the "Beveridges". This kind of simplifies the nomenclature of a very large and constantly increasing circle of acquaintances. I might mention that he has recently formed the acquaintance of a most charming lady, whom he calls Mrs. Morton. She is the wife of the Rev. James Haughton, our neighbor, rector of the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer.

To his sister he wrote intimately of the family life, revealing, as in many other ways, how the little incidents made up his life:

Notwithstanding the sultry weather, which is not sultry but quite contrary, which it is cool enough in the shade when the wind blows, father is sort of miserable from a heavy cold which the same he sits in the cool and drafty places on the piazza and lets the wind blow on his head without any hat on, no wonder he takes cold and we know it is nobody's fault but his own for he has a brand new hat which came home Saturday night at 9 o'clock and was worn all through the hen house and the chicken yard just prior to being worn to church Sunday morning which Solomon in all his glory was never arrayed in a hat like that or wouldn't have been if we hadn't captured it in time and brushed it off not Solomon but father.

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Father has been elected Superintendent of Crocus Hall (it is suspected that he secretly voted for himself) without a dissenting voice and has now on his hand a large contract to rear chickens and keep the table supplied with fresh eggs. Nobody else is permitted to interfere with the hens. They all like the new Superintendent very much indeed and whenever a hen evolves a Negg, she lifts up her voice and calls for him—"Cut-cut-cut-ca-DAP-py!"

Robbie's school with another o in it, closed last Friday and the Junior acquitted himself very creditably indeed in a declamation—"Thoughts for the Discouraged Farmer". There were a number of other declamations, also, but nothing worth listening to after that. The little man is very ambitious and is going to keep up his studies all summer, with his father for tutor. It is his own idea, and he went to work in solid earnest this morning.

Bryn Mawr church is still pastorless. Father leads the prayer meetings—I think the people will be loath to see him relinquish the desk after we get a pastor. It is a delight to our souls—we of the household, to see him, after being so long unappreciated by the Burlington church, taken up with such cordial, earnest, sincere appreciation here in the shadow of Philadelphia, and fairly compelled to take the place which belongs to him. You would think he was the senior deacon of the church. We are going to have him preach over at Merion Square in two weeks—I said Merion Square and I meant it, and I am going to stick to it—and then I suppose they will have no use for anyone else over there.

I have the lov-liest roses this summer you ever saw. I have also about 9,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 rose bugs. Help yourself. They ate the E out of loveliest. Only it wasn't that kind of an e.

Dora complains of feeling a little better. She has not been dangerously ill, but only slimpsey. Father seems feeble, except when he sneezes; then he blows the vines down. Robbie and I are quite chirk. So no more at present. With much love from all of us.

ROB.

Always there was the deepest and tenderest affection and reverence for his father underneath all the

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trubbling effervesce of his humorous descriptions. This is an extract from a letter in November, 1891:

Did I tell you—I don't believe I did—something so sweet and pathetic. The other evening, when the sun was gone and before the lamps were lighted, I was busy at something in the music room. Father was sitting in a "snug harbor" he has taken to himself; the bay window in the dining room, you remember it; looks out on the Mather place and the Fisher homestead. It's handy for father, as he is in and out all day, and doesn't like to climb the stairs to the den too often. Dora has furnished the bay window with a pretty wicker table with shelf for his books, a reading rack from my office, chair, rocker, etc., and it is the coziest sort of a corner. Well, he was rocking there after the twilight hid the lines in Armitage's "History of the Baptists", and I heard him singing. The old baby songs, the old hymn tunes, not to the words of the Hymnal, but the "Bye, oh baby, bye, oh bye". I peeped out to see him. The dear old figure; his arms folded on his breast: the long silver hair falling on his shoulders, the snowy beard, whiter than ever in the November twilight, a little quiver in the voice as he sat, looking out at the fading landscape, singing again to the children grown into manhood and womanhood, some of them singing to children of their own. Nothing could be sweeter or more touching. A gentle, loving, sweet old man.

In an interval, when the condition of his throat sent him home from lecturing, he wrote:

I am home also, not because I want to be, but because I have to be. Been down in West Virginia; rasped my voice to pieces, finally lost it; got caught in the floods; came home voiceless; medical examination; appalled to learn that all the latin parts of my throat are congested, in addition to which, I have acute inflammation of some things I never knew were in my neck at all. Don't know how they got there, either, "less'n dey done crawl up my trouser laig"; am laid off the platform for a week or ten days, but hope and expect to resume work then.

It was all a simple, peaceful, ideal kind of living, those summer days at Bryn Mawr. Mollie was taken

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suddenly and seriously ill in the fall of 1891, and a letter from the brother is alive with tender sympathy and colored with his always ready humor, showing the quick transition of his mind from the humorous to the genuinely serious point of view:

What a heartless old world it is, anyhow. How little do we care for one another. Yesterday, while you lay in what pain and suffering we do not know, we were out in the woods with Dora Weston, gathering nuts. Your brother Robert was high up in a swaying hickory tree, mauling the branches with a club; far down below, Dora Garrett and Dora Weston were prowling through the woods, gathering shellbarks and braiding their gowns with arabesque patterns of "beggar's lice" and in the clear swift flowing Ithan Creek, your father, with his noble old head crowned with long flowing silver locks, had his pantaloons rolled up to his knees, and was wading around, much as his daughter Mary waded in the mountain brook up the Matilala canon. This morning he said at the breakfast table, that "the sudden change in the weather last night had given him a cold". Some foolish person suggested that wading in the creek in October might have had something to do with it. The "poof!" of scorn which greeted the silly suggestion fairly made the white beard curl. He said "that wade did him good; if he was where he could take one every day he would never have a cold". We brought home a wagon load of shellbarks, butter-nuts, walnuts, and I think some 15 or 20 chestnuts, some with worms in, and a few—5 or 6 maybe, without. That's about the usual proportion.

But we didn't forget you, dear, if we were climbing and wading. A postal from Mrs. Collette met us on our way out, and assured us that you were quite encouraged concerning yourself. And this had to content us through the day, while we wait for the next word by this morning's mail. We do hope you are growing better all the time. And that other people are encouraged as well as yourself.

And for a little time, now, good-bye. God bless and keep you. So full of manifold trials have the days of your pilgrimage been—surely if the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed



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in us, there must be abundance of glory in store for you. Surely you can rest your head and heart on this pillow—"He knoweth the way that I take; when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot hath held His steps, His way have I kept, and not declined."

Love and hope and prayers from all of us. Looking for good news from you every day.

A characteristic letter is from the Tremont House in Boston in January of the following year:

Lectured in old Salem Wednesday night, where they used to burn the witches. Funny hall. Amphitheatre, like lecture room in medical college, lecturer stands at bottom of cistern, people sit all around him. Two or three good buggy top hats shut out three-fifths of the audience. About five minutes after lecture began, woman had a fit. Five or six men carried her out with her feet in the air. Then at the close of lecture man read a dispatch announcing verdict in Guiteau case. Crowd cheered and clapped their hands. So with fit at one end and hanging at other, humorous lecture passed off very cheerfully indeed.

And in another letter he pays this tribute to "Dedie":

What the Nest would do without Dora to flutter and hover and brood over it, I don't know. Little would it avail old Robin to fly across the country, twittering from platform to platform and bringing home "grub" in his chattering bill, if there were no Dora to keep the Nest in order and take care of three helpless boys "aging" from the little man of 14 to the grand-sire of 71. . . .

In summing up his joys in work and play near the close of his Bryn Mawr life, and after twenty-five years of newspaper work, he gives this account of himself:

I am an early riser. Six o'clock sees me reluctantly crawling out of a bed where I have been utterly unconscious for eight hours. "Six o'clock isn't early?" Well, any man who is in the habit of rising earlier than that, unless the house is on

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fire, should consult a physician. Before breakfast, I take a short walk, say to the nearest apple or pear tree, if the fruit is in season. That is about forty-five feet from the door. That is all the exercise I take before breakfast. If I had to walk a mile to breakfast I would simply omit the cheery meal of incense breathing morn, that's all.

I do not even read the morning paper till breakfast is served; then it is read aloud to the family with interlineations and running comments which the audience has long since learned to recognize and interpret. It is rather confusing, however, to guests who happen to be present, and who are sometimes observed during the day to be searching the paper for personal notices and little items of home news that are only visible through the family spectacles. From eight o'clock until one, I am locked in my den, doing with my might what my hand findeth to do. During these hours I am a dead man, so far as callers are concerned. Not even a card is slipped under the den door. Nobody is permitted to help me waste a minute of my work time.

In the afternoon, if at the right time of the year, I move my shrubbery for the season. You can't tell where you want a bush or tree until you have watched it for two or three years. "Can't, hey?" I tell you, I have transplanted fruit trees four years old, with my own hands. Did they live? Of course. They wouldn't have survived, but that a neighbor or two came along and told me they would die. That settled it. I sat up nights with those trees, watered them with my tears and held them in my arms when they seemed restless and feverish, and I am eating pears and apples from them in these fruitful, happy days. There isn't a fruit tree on my little acre that hasn't been condemned to death half a dozen times by some man who knew it all. I am the most easy-going, easily-ruled, easily-led man on this planet. But if there is anything in life I do enjoy, and love to do, it is to have some man come along and tell me I can't do a certain thing, and prove to me by most unanswerable argument and undeniable proof that I can't, and then go right straight ahead and do it.

I don't believe I ever did anything in my life worth the doing, save when I was driven to it by the flat contradiction of man or Fate. If a man pats me on the back and tells me that

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I can do a bit of work better than anybody else on earth, I am very liable to sniff the incense gratefully and take his word for it, and let it go at that, and do nothing. But if he says I can't do it, it does my soul good to do that very thing.

I love to write. If I were thirty years younger, I'd like to go back and take my old desk-place on the *Hawk-Eye*. There isn't a thing about desk work that I do not enjoy, from the moment of incubation to the final revision of the manuscript or the reading of the last proof. I don't find so much pleasure in the completed sketch; the finished work hasn't much charm for me; but down to the very center of brain and heart, I do love the work of building, even such light and flimsy work as mine, is at its best, or rather, its least, bad.

As to his favorite books, he said:

There are three books I always pack in my valise when I leave home—the Bible, Shakespeare, Mrs. Browning. If I add a fourth it is Thackeray; and next to him certainly Charles Lamb. Something of Riley comes next—“Old Fashioned Roses”, preferably. Eugene Field, of course. And Carlyle has a never-failing hold upon my liking. And in my room, handy for a “night-cap” book, Thackeray's “Roundabout Papers”.

Some letters to his son show the tender and affectionate spirit of the man. Writing at Easter, 1898:

A happy joyous Easter to you, with all blessings for the sunrise of your manhood. May you, like Joseph of old, be—

“A fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall.” Whose “Bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob; . . . Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with the blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under. . . . The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the Everlasting hills.”

This letter written in reply to an account of the class dinner at Haverford and to reach Bryn Mawr upon

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his son's twenty-first birthday, expresses his breadth of affection, his boundless hope for the man's future. It reveals his love expressed in words of rich meaning and with the characteristic pyramiding of subjects and phrases that was his peculiar gift:

Your letter of April 2nd was received here on the 5th. And the Class Dinner is eaten and digested? "Gone glimmering down the light of other days—a school boy's tale—the wonder of an hour?" Gone are the sweets and solids; forgotten already the taste of the fluffy things; the lips that smacked joyously over a strange but toothsome entree are puckered over a pungent lime or a twisted root; the mouths that watered over what was coming next are yelling behind the coach lines; the dinner is gone.

But always there is something at these banquets that abides. Somewhere or other, tucked away in the memory, locked up in brain cell and encysted in the heart as well. Something of the Class Dinner there is, that is thoroughly assimilated. It goes into the blood and brawn, knots itself into the toughest muscles; knits itself into the hardest bone; turns into "red blood" and throbs with human affections, with hope, and courage; turns into gray matter and thinks and guides these affections; ennobles these friendships of boyhood and young manhood; turns into fire and burns with lofty purpose and pure fidelity. Something "stays with you", Son; don't you know it? And feel it? The class dinner goes with the class room; the social element is as much a part of life as is the love of the books. These friendships of today will be knitted more firmly tomorrow.

It is a splendid thing to be a Man, dear. To feel in your soul and brain certain responsibilities that you must face and carry alone. To realize that Zeebs and Dedie are now the dearest and most loving friends you have on this earth, but that they can now only say—"I advise" and "I suggest" and "I wish". We can no longer say to you, with any legal right—"Thou shalt." Only God and your conscience say that to you now. You are a man, and you breathe free air for the first time in your life. You can come and go as you list. You

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are a man. And being a man, you stand, as, in a certain sense, you never did before, face to face with God's Eternal "Must". What he says "Must", must be. And it must be done. And there is no avoiding it. Rebels or willing subjects, at the last every man has to do God's will.

How splendidly you are equipped for manhood's responsibilities. Two women, with their unselfish loves, and pure ambitions for you, and sweet purposes for you, have gone into your very life—little Momsie and Dedie. Your educational atmosphere has been clear and godly. You have breathed a good air. Your years of preparation have been pleasantly environed. You are a well equipped and a well-drilled soldier. Therefore, much is expected of you.

I am so glad for you, dear. The growing years mean so much. My own didn't have a good trend. The camp and the barrack-room, the trench and the fort are not the best schools for the highest character. The "Mulvaney" and Kipling standards of personal honor and fidelity to duty may be high enough, but, their moral standard, if not positively low, is painfully lax. God be thanked you have escaped this. You don't have to race against a handicap.

And yet, my own dear Boy, dearest and best and truest and Best-Loved Comrade, even with the best preparations, the camp and the barrack influence somehow get into every man's life a little bit. And the Man must rise above them. Sin lieth in wait. It is a young lion; strong, brave, defiant, cruel. "A man's foes shall be they of his own household"—of his own life and heart and mind.

Now, dear Boy, the devil didn't make us. God made man after His own image. The devil has no creative power. He can only disfigure, defile, corrupt, what God has made; that's all. When God breathed the soul into the Man, he breathed into him a spark of divinity—a touch of the God. He breathed into him every impulse that he has; every desire, every passion, and made him pure as the angels with them all. Now remember, you have no passions that are not given you of God. Keep them pure as he intends you shall, and every one of them will add manly strength and vigor to your soul and arm and brain. Don't let sin abuse them. Don't let the devil disfigure them. They come of God; use them for him, and at the last surrender them to Him again, pure and clean as He gave them.

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A thousand congratulations, my dear, dear Son! May all the years of your manhood come to you freighted with work and responsibilities, with good hope, good heart, good courage, good purpose. You remember what old Polonias says to Laertes:

“To thine own self be true
And it shall follow, as the night the day,
Thou can’t not then be false to any man.”

All the world is before you, dear Prince! And all space! And all Time! Make conquest of Destiny then! “Steady! Forward—Guide right—March!” Hip—hip—Hurrah! And again—hurrah!! And once more—Hurrah!!! Give you God speed, dear Prince!

Most lovingly, your

FATHER

And this letter written upon the boy’s twenty-first birthday:

You *were* a happy child. The happiest child all the year round, I ever knew in my life. And all your resources were within yourself. Your happiness was heaven-born. Your joy was in your heart. You were as happy and content in your home, with only your three “grown-ups”, Little Momsie, and Dedie and Zeeks, about you as you were with a house full of children. Indeed you were at your happiest at home.

And now the days of your boyhood are over. A boy’s heart you will carry in your breast for many years, I hope. A boy’s happiness; a boy’s enthusiasms with a man’s purposes and a man’s powers and a man’s courage. I pray the years of your manhood, in its happiness, the purity of its joys, the fidelity of its convictions, may be foreshadowed by your boyhood. God give you all grace and strength and courage and patience.

Never did he fail to include the reflections based upon his years of experience and observation, for instance:

I believe in practical education too, in Biology and Botany. But, we can’t—and we mustn’t—all be Biologists and Botanists.

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The world wants dreamers, poets, prophets, dear—they are all three the same—Bunyan, Shakespeare, Isaiah—as well as Botanists and Biologists. Biology and Botany have changed and “reviewed their own decisions” and reversed their teaching many times since Bunyan, Shakespeare and Isaiah. But *they* have not changed. It seems to me that Poetry is nearer Truth than anything else in the world. God himself was Poet and Artist when he formed this planet. Look at it!

The activities of this period of his life as reflected through his letters were centered at Robin's Nest, for which he held an affection greatly enhanced because of its setting. Bryn Mawr—a rare bit of Old England in a corner of his native State—appealed to his intense love of nature.

He thus wrote of it:

Bryn Mawr—a dimple on the landscape; its artistic varieties in home architecture; lawns that are dreams and gardens that are visions; roads and drives that are smoother and cleaner and harder the oftener it rains; its shaded lanes, with a fringe of snowy-blossomed or crimson-berried dogwoods under the overhanging chestnuts, and maples, old oaks and great tulip-poplars; and such incomparable woodland strolls over leafy carpets and moss-grown paths; delightful wood roads that entice you into the heart of the woods, and there fade into a squirrel track that disappears up a tree, and so leaves you most happily lost—a thousand miles from human help and only ten miles from Philadelphia; brooks that run beside the paths in the woods, babbling and chattering and whispering, and always coming back close to the path, after they have run away from it, like a playing child, for all the world as though the path had been there the longer, and the brook would get lost if it got too far out of sight; the green meadows; the gentle slope of the hills; and everywhere such woods—such woods!

CHAPTER IX

CASUAL INCIDENTS

MANY were the interesting incidents of his career from the beginning of his *Hawk-Eye* days to his leaving Bryn Mawr. On one occasion, when he visited at Denver, a *News* reporter and Rev. Myron W. Reed, the brilliant preacher who died a number of years ago, called upon him at the same time. Burdette, Riley and Reed were friends of the old days when Burdette was accustomed to visit Riley at Indianapolis.

"He and Riley came in on me," said Reed, "about six o'clock Sunday night, when they knew I would be busier than a pirate, and they sat down, one on each side of me, and told me to go right on writing, and then commenced to tell stories across me. I did not write much."

He and Reed talked at the same time of "Bill" Nye, a common friend.

"When Nye went to New York," said Burdette, "we were a little anxious to see how he would stand transplanting to the East. Riley showed me a letter Nye wrote to him in which he said he had been introduced to Mrs. Langtry and Mrs. James Brown Potter, and their forwardness so disgusted him that he 'thanked the Lord that He had given his share of beauty to Mrs. Langtry and his hair to the Seven Sutherland Sisters.'"

In the same exchange of recollections with Reed, Mr. Burdette said:

I used to write on the trains, but I don't any more. Once in a while I get out my pad and put a beautiful point on a
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pencil and number about twenty-five pages, and then I suddenly discover that my hat is in the seat back of me and my throat feels like a lime kiln, and my head is back and I suspect that I have been snoring, and from the pleased look on the faces of my fellow-travelers, I am sure that my diagnosis is right, and I start for the water tank and feel like staying there.

Again he told of this incident:

Riley visited us at Bryn Mawr, and you should have seen the time he had trying to fix up his routes through New Jersey. He hadn't any idea of locality, and a time-table was perfectly blind to him. The one he had had several columns showing the population of the town and also the fare. At last he turned to me in despair. "Look at this thing," he said, "it hasn't got any sense. All I can find out is that I arrive at Lambert at 3,324 and leave there at \$2.47."

I went home from a lecture trip one time and found Jim sitting in the depot. I said he must come home with me. It was while my wife was in the hospital, which was only a block from the depot. He demurred and said he hadn't time, but I rushed him off, and called in my wife and my boy and sent for the doctor and introduced him to everybody, and finally noticed that at every introduction they laughed. Finally I said, "Jim, how long is it since you were here?" and he said, "Yesterday." I had been introducing him to folks he knew better than I did.

His work was inspirational, and the consistent and sustained effort required in building a novel was impossible for him:

There is one thing I cannot do [he said], I cannot write a serial story. My work has always been daily newspaper work, which teaches a fellow to finish his story in one issue. Several times I have been asked to write a serial, have promptly accepted, sat down to my work, outlined the story, and then finished the whole business—introduced, married and killed the whole outfit in the first chapter, had to create a new family for the second chapter, start a new settlement for the third, and import a shipload of immigrants for the fourth. Somehow I cannot give my characters the blessing of long life. Loved of the gods, they die young.

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At fifty-two, in a newspaper interview at Spokane, he said:

I would rather write than lecture, and I used to do both, but now when I travel about the country with a lecture, my pen grows rusty. One thing at a time is enough. Good men are scarce, my son, and I must take care of myself for the sake of the American people. I am seven years older than Bill Nye was when he carried his laughter into the silent land. Two years older than Eugene Field. Seven years older than Bunner of *Puck*, who is now fighting for his life in San Francisco. Older than Riley who was wearily struggling through brain fever in Indianapolis, and you see the patriarch has to be mindful of his strength. All these men I knew in the early days. Met them often and loved them well. Learned the serious side of their laughing lives, and knew the deep octave of humor—pathos, that throbbed in their hearts.

As if he was to receive compensation for such appreciation of others, in later years an author who had received a kindly note from him, wrote to a mutual friend:

Such a beautiful letter from Mr. Burdette—a man who recalls for us more fully than any other living writer, the humor and pathos of Dickens. It quite thrills me with, I trust, a feeling better than vanity, to find anything done by one's obscure self noted by such a man.

And Mr. Bok, as late as 1913, penned this appreciation:

To my mind no man has ever equalled you in your marvelous combination of the humorous with the philosophical. And you will stand alone as the best exponent of that peculiarly effective combination in writing!

He had nothing of sham or hypocrisy, and little of emotional hero worship. He was disposed to give things their proper value, as in an article on "The Laughter of Yesterday":

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Many—most—of the stories of men of our own day and generation lack interest for the public mind because they are too personal. They belong to the dead men's intimate friends. After he has been dead 100 years this element is eliminated, it has faded out. What remains is of the immortal part of the man. It is that which belongs to posterity.

Not long ago Phillips Brooks' letters to the children of his household were published in one of the magazines, and simply because they were written by Phillips Brooks. They were just such letters as almost any man might have written to the children at home, and at the risk of being burned at the stake for heresy, one may say the same thing of many of the letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, now being published. Some of them may be characteristic. Many of them—most of them—are like many of the letters you have written and do write to your mother, and if your mother may be placed on the stand, she will convince the jury that your letters are vastly more entertaining and original.

In the old days, when "Youth beheld all happiness gleaming in the prospect", I have strolled about the streets of St. Louis with Eugene Field, marking the trail by a mile of "giggle". Could any of the things at which I laughed make you laugh now? No; rather they would make you pity us for our light-mindedness, because the giggle belonged to the time and the place and the friends who giggled. Like Emerson's sea-weed, I could not bring home with the weed cast up by that light, foam-crested tide of our laughter, the cry of the gulls, the long line of coast, the wash of the waves on the beach, the glint of the sunshine on the shells.

To drag Eugene's drolleries out of their environment is to pluck up a dainty wild flower by its roots from its mossy bed in some forest glade, carry it in your hot hands several miles through the summer sun, and then plant it in the garden of roses.

His newspaper method, what might be termed his creed, with respect to his fellows, is indicated in one of his comments after years of newspaper work:

Every time you are tempted to say an ungentle word or write an unkind line, or say a mean, ungracious thing about

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anybody, just stop; look ahead twenty-five years and think how it may come back to you then. Let me tell you how I write mean letters and bitter editorials, my boy. Sometimes when a man has pitched into me and "cut me up rough", and I want to pulverize him and wear his gory scalp on my girdle and hang his hide on my fence, I write a letter or editorial that is to do the business. I write something that will drive sleep from his eyes and peace from his soul for six weeks. Oh, I do hold him over a slow fire and roast him! Gall and aqua fortis drip from my blistering pen. Then—I don't mail the letter, and I don't print the editorial!

There's always plenty of time to crucify a man. The vilest criminal is entitled to a little reprieve. I put the manuscript away in a drawer. Next day I look at it. The ink is cold; I read it over and say: "I don't know about this. There's a good deal of bludgeon and bowie-knife journalism in that. I'll hold it over a day longer." The next day I read it over again. I laugh, and say "Pshaw!" and I can feel my cheeks getting a little hot. The fact is, I am ashamed that I ever wrote it, and I hope that nobody has seen it, and I have half forgotten the article or letter that filled my soul with rage, I haven't hurt anybody, and the world goes right along, making 24 hours a day as usual, and I am all the happier.

Try it, my boy. Put off your bitter remarks until tomorrow. Then, when you try to say them deliberately, you'll find that you have forgotten them, and ten years later, ah! how glad you will be that you did! Be good-natured, my boy. Be loving and gentle with the world, and you'll be amazed to see how dearly and tenderly the worried, tired, vexed, harassed old world loves you.

His humor pervaded everything, and was so cunningly applied it disarmed many a critic. When his bureau managers were dissatisfied with the criticisms and comments he had selected for a folder which was designed to be circulated in connection with the publicity to be given his lectures, he had printed for them an eight-page folder, a page of which may be reproduced:

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Introducing

ROBERT J. BURDETTE

“Where is our usual Manager of Mirth?”—*Midsummer Night’s Dream.*

“I knew him, Horatio, a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy.”—*Hamlet.*

“O, you shall see him laugh till his face be like a wet cloak ill laid up.”—*Henry IV.*

“A merrier man,
Within the limits of becoming mirth
I never spent an hour’s talk withal.”

—*Love’s Labor Lost.*

“From the crown of his head to the sole of his foot he is all mirth—he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper; for what his heart thinks, his tongue speaks.”—*Much Ado About Nothing.*

“His eye begets occasion for his wit;
For every object that the one doth catch,
The other turns to a mirth loving jest.”

—*Love’s Labor Lost.*

After two pages of such flattering comment from Shakespeare, he followed it with equally pertinent selections from Milton, Thackeray and Carlisle, with the observation that surely the approval of these eminent men should convince any one he was altogether worth hearing.

Some of the humorous incidents of his lecture experience he has written in his own inimitable way. This account of a Southern incident is worth preserving:

If I had not been a Funny Man, I might have been a Railroad Magnate or a Corporation Lawyer or some other of those Get-rich-quick Concerns. One morning, two years ago, I missed connection at Nashville. I had an engagement to lecture in Louisville that night—a most important one, before

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the John A. Broadus Camp of Confederate Veterans. I just naturally had to get there. When I found the train upon which I was an ex-passenger had gone and left me, I flew to the "Ellen N" and pled for a special. The officials sympathized with me and let me have a special for 187 miles at one dollar per. That from a lecturer! When Mr. Morgan set out to buy the Louisville & Nashville, if he had come to me I could and would have told him exactly what Mr. Gates would do to him.

But it was a groundhog case with me, so I went down into my narrow-gauge wallet and fished up the \$187, which left me just enough to go without dinner and climb to my private car in solitary and penniless grandeur. They gave me a nice little light engine, and the man in the cab made the wheels go round, and we slid the State of Tennessee underneath us at seventy miles an hour. All went well until we got within about sixty-five miles of Louisville, when we caught up with the train that had run away from me in the morning, with the engine crippled, or in the ditch, or something. And they didn't do a thing but take my nice little "pay car" engine and hook it on to that great emigrant-tourist-and-general-express train. It was like hitching up a dainty little three-minute "stepper" to a coal cart. We crawled along, with occasional stops for breath, and drifted into Louisville about nine o'clock or after.

Mrs. Burdette was in Louisville, and, getting a wire about my detention, she went over to the hall and held the audience for me, but many had escaped before she got there, and the committee claimed damages. And as they held the bag, I naturally held the umbrella. But after I had settled with the committee I put on my war paint, then painted it over with a soft coat of sweet Quaker dove-color, mixed with the oil of kindness, which I have ever found to be a little the best fighting color on earth, and sailed into the office of Superintendent Johnson. Somebody had signalled him there was a torpedo boat in the roadstead and he was ready for me. He fired a shot to windward, and we came to close action.

"Now," he said, "if we hadn't given you that special train you could not have reached Louisville at all, could you?"

"No, sir," I said, so meekly that even my dove-colored paint faded to a soft ashes-of-roses hue.

"And by the service of our special you did make your engagement?"

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"Yes, sir," I said.

"And without it you would have lost your engagement, your fee and disappointed your audience?"

"Yes, sir," I said.

"And you would have had large damage to pay for failure of contract?"

"Indeed I would," I said.

"And we really saved all that for you, didn't we?"

"Indeed you did," I assented.

"Well, then," he went on, "I don't see what claim you have for any rebate."

I told him I didn't want a cent of rebate. I was perfectly willing to pay for my train.

"Then," he said, "what do you want?"

"Well," I said, "I want pay for my engine and my service. I want pay for hauling the United States mail, the express matter, baggage car, the smoker, three day coaches and a Pullman. I want my pro rata on all the tickets and fares collected on that train. I want my mileage on all that stuff, human and merchandise for sixty-five miles. That was my engine that hauled that train into Louisville. I don't want much; I only want all I can reach my arms around and what little there may be outside of 'em."

"Well," he said, "suppose we cut the price of your special in two—how would that strike you?"

I said that was the very thing I had up my sleeve. The Superintendent applied the axe to the bill, a clerk signed a check and gave it to me, and we parted friends.

He told also in his later years how one of Riley's cleverest platform stories came to be. During a visit with Riley some years ago, Mr. Burdette having gone to Indianapolis when Riley was recovering from a stroke of apoplexy, they exchanged many recollections, and Mr. Burdette, in writing of the visit, said:

Riley talked a great deal, and with very tender and loving laughter, of Bill Nye, his old time yoke-fellow. Riley knew better than any other man perhaps, the pathetic shadows that drifted across Nye's patient, brave, hopeful life. For years he

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was a sick man, and many nights he was at his work on the platform when he should have been in the hospital.

Bill was good-natured, even with the bores whom Riley slammed down. One morning on their lyceum tour through Georgia, they landed in a city where they knew by past experience they would be assailed by self-appointed delegations of entertainers. They would be importuned to take long drives over rough and dusty roads, to see things they had seen a thousand times and didn't want to see the first time. They would be dragged away to luncheon with people who made them tired and dragooned to dinner with folk who bored them. And Jim rebelled. They obtained privacy in their own rooms long enough to wash their faces and the poet said:

“Bill, here's where I shake the committee on hospitality. I'm not going out of my room till we go to the hall tonight. I'll play ill, I'll do anything but wear myself out listening to a lot of old stories badly told all day and then go before the audience that pays its good money to hear us at our best so tired and worn out that I look and feel like a shadow on the scenery. Let's send away our genial friends and sleep till dinner time.”

So Jim went dead, as he knows how to do, but Bill couldn't bear to disappoint the committee. He came back to dine at the hotel, however, pale and tired, but faintly smiling and trying to feel strong for the evening's work. Jim was mad. He determined to teach Bill a lesson.

“When we went down to dinner,” he told it to me, “I made up my mind I'd give him enough of old stale, worm-eaten stories, such as I knew he'd been feeding on all afternoon. I began to tell him as earnestly as though it was newer than the hour, the oldest story I ever heard. I heard the circus clown tell it when I was a boy and the first eternity only knows how old it had to be before a clown would be allowed to use it.

“You've heard it long before ever you heard me tell it—the old man's story of the soldier carrying his wounded comrade off the battlefield—the comrade whose leg was first shot off and whose head was carried away by a second cannon ball on their way to the field hospital.

“Well, I dragged the old thing out as long as I could, just to weary poor Bill. I told it in the forgetful fashion of an old man with confused memory; told the point two or three times

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before I came to it; went back again and again to pick up dropped stitches in the web of my story; wandered and maundered. Thinks I, I'll give this lad a taste of age-long stories that will sicken him of them forever. I made it as long and dreary as I knew how."

But to Riley's indignant amazement Nye received the narrative with convulsions of merriment. He choked over his meat and drink until he quit trying to eat and just listened, giggled, chuckled and roared. He declared it was the best thing Riley had ever done and insisted that he put it in his program.

At first Riley thought his joke-fellow had only detected the plot and was meeting it in his own way. But he convinced Jim that he was in earnest and, after about a month of this importunity, Riley told the story to an audience of two thousand people. The galleries fell, the house went wild, and he had to tell it again. Ever after it was one of his funniest numbers. The story has been told a million times by a hundred thousand people. But there is but one Riley in the hundred thousand.

Another story of this period of lecture life he told in his own words:

I recall the last time I appeared in Toronto. Bill Nye had preceded me, and the papers simply crucified him. He was followed by James Whitcomb Riley, and they went for him worse than they did for Nye. But when I arrived I made up my mind that I would win, and I tried my best to succeed and talked my loveliest. I felt so sure of the result that for once I broke my rule not to read a paper before breakfast, and ordered up the *Empire*.

Well, son, that was the worst roast that any man ever got. The editor was a man named E. E. Sheppard, whom I had known in the states. He was a southerner and had gone to Canada after the war, but he had been a friend, and to think that a man with whom I had broken bread and eaten salt could treat me so was simply unbearable. I don't know to this day whether he saw the article or not, but it was a regular cruel scorcher. I packed up at once and left, and down at Peoria I happened to pick up a paper a few days after and read a dispatch to the effect that the *Empire* office had been de-

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stroyed by fire the night before. I headed straight for a telegraph office and sent this message: "Dear Sheppard: How do you like a roast yourself?" I did not get an answer, but it was a consolation to me, I admit.

The *Saturday Evening Post* in 1902 gave this account of a lecture experience showing his human quality:

In the winter of 1885 two college boys of Wooster, Ohio, desiring to make some money to get fraternity pins, decided to bring on a lecturer, and secured Mr. Robert J. Burdette for \$125. They posted the town with huge bills saying, "He is Coming", and later with others saying, "He is Here", and giving his name. The pasting of the first lot was looked upon as a college prank and detectives were engaged to hunt for the perpetrators.

When the night arrived a very small audience assembled in the opera house. To add to the discomfiture of the young men Burdette was delayed by a wreck and did not arrive until ten o'clock, by which time some of the audience were demanding their money back. One of the boys strove to hold the audience by reading telegrams from Burdette, some genuine and some fictitious, giving his progress. The other one went to the train to meet the lecturer, and Burdette, noticing his long face as they rode back, said:

"What's the matter? Haven't you got a good house?"

"No, indeed; mighty poor," said the young fellow.

"Cheer up, my boy," said Burdette; "cheer up. I'll never let it be said after I'm dead that any young man ever lost anything by Bob Burdette."

The lecture itself was a success, lasting until past midnight. It was Saturday night and at twelve o'clock Mr. Burdette took out his watch and announced the fact, and said that if there were any ministers in the audience they could be excused.

When it came time to settle the boys found that after paying other expenses they had but \$66, and visions of a forced draft on father came to one of them and the sacrifice of a pet calf was the sole resource left to the other.

Burdette said: "Well, boys, how much have you left after taking out all the expenses? Sixty-six dollars, eh? Well, there are three of us; that's just twenty-two dollars apiece."

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They insisted that he take it all, but he would not listen to it. He said: "No, we are all fraternity boys and we'll share alike. We belong to another fraternity, my boys, and that is the fraternity of humanity. All I ask of you is that, if you ever meet some other young man in trouble you will give him a lift and think of Bob Burdette."

Characteristics which endeared him to his friends and which they hold in memory, are illustrated by the reminiscence of Mr. James B. Borland, an old Pennsylvania friend:

It was in 1880 that I made the acquaintance of Robert J. Burdette. He had lectured here the year before, coming in on a train in the middle of the night from Emlenton, in the lower part of our county, and as there were no night clerks in the hotels here in those days, he was compelled to lie in front of the hotel fire to slumber until morning. I did not hear him on that occasion, but know that he at once ingratiated himself into the hearts of our people.

When he returned, in 1880, he lectured under the auspices of the Owls, a literary society, one of the members of which, Thomas Alexander, who had fallen in love with Burdette the year before, filled in an off night for him at Warren, arranging with me to go along to look after the business end. It was a bitter cold night in March, and Parshall Hall, where the lecture was delivered, was as cold as the inside of a refrigerator in the summer time. I sold the tickets at the box office, and when Mr. Burdette arrived he spent some time with me there, during which the editor of a weekly paper presented his card. There was only a handful of people present, and I thought of calling the lecture off, so I turned to Mr. Burdette and asked what I should do. He replied: "Pass him in and send out and get him a bottle of champagne and a box of cigars." Demurring against going ahead with the program, he said: "We'll trot for the gate receipts, anyway." On account of the chilly atmosphere of the hall, he retained his overcoat and drew a chair up to the footlights, where there was a trifle of warmth, remarking, as he did so, that the audience was so small he felt like taking them on his lap. Then he proceeded to entertain them in the manner of which he was a past master.

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The next day he went to Titusville, and an incident in connection with our departure is worth relating, as showing the spontaneity of his humor. The station was a little, box-like affair, with a narrow aisle, and while we were seated there, awaiting the arrival of our train, a farmer wearing a heavy overcoat, with bulging pockets, passed down the aisle, his coat brushing against the people on either side. "Now there's a man," said Burdette, "who takes so much room in this world that when he dies and is buried in a six-inch coffin his friends will take a second look at him to see if he is not lying on his side."

On the train when the "butcher" came through he dropped a book in my lap that proved to be a copy of Burdette's "Rise and Fall of the Mustache and Other Hawkeyetems". Not being aware of the fact that such a book was on the market, I naturally expressed my surprise and pleasure and purchased the copy, Mr. Burdette offering to write an inscription on the fly-leaf, which he did, as follows:

MY DEAR BORLAND:

If you have a friend and you love him well,
Let my advice through your friendship glimmer;
Print all his vices in "nonpareil",
But publish his virtues in big "long primer".

With the compliments of your friend, the author,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

On the train, March 9, 1880.

Needless to say, this book is one of my choicest possessions, as well as the memory of friendship that lasted through all the years. I was only in my nineteenth year when I met him, and on account of my being in the newspaper business at such an early age, he seemed to show a particular fondness for me. Afterwards, whenever he lectured anywhere near within an afternoon's ride by train, I went to have a visit with him, and heard the lecture on "The Rise and Fall of the Mustache" so often that I could almost deliver it myself.

On another occasion he visited Franklin early in April, the season when people were moving. After the lecture, with one or two others, we spent some time in his room at the hotel, he and I going for a short walk before midnight. We ran across

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an acquaintance of mine, who played the violin for dances as a side issue, coming along the street with his violin case under his arm. I naturally enquired of him where he had been playing, and he replied: "At a house-warming in the Third Ward", a practice often customary in those days when families sought new abiding places. "I'd like to attend something like that," said Burdette, and asked the acquaintance if he would not return and take us along. This he readily agreed to, and it was not long after our arrival that he was the center of attraction, himself playing the violin while the dozen or more people danced. I relate this incident merely to show his versatility and how easily he could adapt himself to his environment.

The last visit he made to Franklin was at my initiative. I wrote the Bureau for a date, just for the sake of bringing him on for an old-time visit. They fixed on a time in October, and after I had announced it in my paper, some of the young ladies of the Methodist church called on me to inquire under whose auspices he was coming. I explained the matter to them and said they could have the date if they so desired. A short time afterward, at the request of the bureau, who had booked him for an appearance at Library Hall, Pittsburgh, on the date first given, we agreed to change to November. On the afternoon of the date in October when he was to appear in Pittsburgh, who should come breezing cheerily into my office but Burdette, at an hour when it was too late to catch a train for the Smoky City. As soon as I espied him, I said: "What are you doing here? You are advertised to lecture in Pittsburgh tonight." "Well, I was never notified by the bureau after they changed the Franklin date," he replied, "and so, thinking I had a night off, stopped off for a visit with you on my way to Erie, where I am to lecture tomorrow night." When he came back the next month, and, by the way, he was greeted with a crowded house, he told me he watched the Pittsburgh papers the next morning after the night he was to have been there and received some of the best notices he had experienced in his entire career on the lecture platform. The reporters had taken it for granted that he filled the date and wrote their notices without going near Library Hall.

William Allen White, the editor of the *Emporia Gazette*, was one of the friends of his earlier lecture days,

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and after Burdette's appearance at Emporia, White's comment is indicative of the Burdette spirit and of White's appreciation:

Emporia is a better town today because Robert J. Burdette was here last night with his "merry heart". A thousand people came to Albert Taylor Hall to hear him, and a thousand burdens are lighter today and ten thousand cares have fled. Men with money bags have come to town and left sorrow and wrinkles in their trail. Men with knotty problems to solve have visited Emporia and headaches and weariness have followed them. Men with green-eyed envious visions of other people's iniquity have come and heartaches and ranklings have seared their scars upon those who listened. But the Man with the Merry Heart came and today God's smile of benediction is on the dull old town. The lecture was all very funny, and all very true, and all very sweet—gentle and kind as a May breeze in an orchard with the apple trees in bloom. The Little Man with the Merry Heart helped old Emporia out of its crusty rut—so God bless him for his coming.

He was fond of his pen and pencil, not alone for his written work, but because of his gift at illuminating his letters, and, in fact, all of his manuscripts and documents, with sketches and fancily colored and ornamental initials. His captions too had always his spirit of humor, for instance, the copy of a winter lecture route which he made to send to a member of his family is headed "Robin Tracks in the Snow". The back of an old file case in which he kept copies of addresses and sermons he labelled with elaborate care "Cold Tongue". He had a keen appreciation always of the value of good service, and in replying to a request for a lecture at a reduced fee, he wrote:

DEAR MAN—Yours of June 30th, asking for an engagement at "reduced rates" is at hand. Replying, I have to say that at a time when

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Hod Carriers, Drain Pipe Layers, Plasterers, Carpenters,
Graders, Ice Men, Garbage Collectors, Milk Men, City
Scavengers, Blacksmiths, Plumbers, Tramps, Cooks,
Waiters, Bell Boys, Chambermaids, Porters,
Bootblacks, Sandwich Men, Trolley Men,
"Hello" Girls, Painters, Hackmen,
Gamblers, Dog Catchers, and
Everybody else

unite in demanding an increase of wages about every fifteen minutes—and get it, and ask for more—I would be ashamed to step out on the platform if I belittled and cheapened my own "trade", when every other working man in America is exalting his.

For the past twenty-five years my fee has been high, but it has always been the same. When times were so good that we couldn't stand it, it didn't make me worth a cent more. When times were so hard that men forgot what meat tasted like, it didn't deteriorate me a cent. Other spellbinders soared out of sight in the flush times—and went down out of sight in the years of the lean kine. I have always said, "My lecture is worth just so much, rain or shine." I have always been a "stand patter".

And now I am too old to change. Everybody knows what my price is. And just one closing word, my boy—I have been on the platform nearly twenty-eight years, and I have seen more lecture associations flattened out, smashed, "busted"—by \$25 men, than I ever knew to be even "embarrassed" by one-hundred-dollar men. Put that in your meerschaum and inhale gently.

Never was he too busy to remember his old friends of the bureau, and upon his return from a European trip, he wrote the Lyceum Bureau at Boston in these terms:

DEAR MAN: Where have I been since last June that I didn't make any speeches last winter? Oh, well, I had been traveling up and down the land of America under your own piloting for twenty-five years on "one-night stands" and I felt that I needed the change which travel alone could give to

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such a sedentary life. So I set my sails in order, and smote the sounding billows and came abroad. I went to London to visit the Queen and now I am going back again to call on the King; went up and down that land from castle to cathedral and then hied me to Scotland to pick up a collection of "burrs" to mix with my "Hs"; learned Edinboro' by heart, which is the only way to learn Scotland, visited the Highlands and all the Loch country; tramped and stage-coached and boated; came back to England and loitered in the Lake country of "Wordsworthshire"; went to Paris to get rid of people who wanted to know if "I had been to the Exposition".

Went to Germany and sailed up the Rhine as far as Mayence; got off the boat and went to Munich; took in Oberamergau and the "Passion Play"; went to Zurich and thence to Lucerne; climbed mountains till my shoes wore out; went to Geneva and studied Calvinism; crossed the mountains and went to the Lake of Como to see if it was all true; went to Milan to count the statues on the Cathedral; got to Venice and found it hard work to tear myself away from the loveliest "loafing place" on earth—and it's on the water; then went to Florence and lost myself in a thousand miles of picture galleries; advertised for myself, got out and went to Rome to see the Pope and the new King and Queen; then went to Naples; visited Pompeii, but didn't locate there; dead town; climbed Vesuvius and looked into the crater; nothing in it; drove along the coast of Italy as far as Paestum; got on ship again and came to Cairo; steam-boated up the Nile as far as the first cataract; went into more tombs than I supposed there were in the world; came back down the river a mile at a time; have been enjoying Cairo and its bewildering streets and fascinating bazars.

Next week we sail for Jaffa, and thence go to Jerusalem; spend about a month in Palestine, then go to Damascus; visit Baalbec, and get back to Egypt again; then sail for Athens; spend the rest of March in Greece; then a little time in Turkey; then to Austria and Germany; then another little stay in Paris; thence to England for part of June, and home by the first of July, ready to lecture the rest of my life, for I feel that I will need a little travel for a change.

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His newspaper feature articles, like many of his personal letters, swing rapidly from grave to gay and from gay to grave, and there are many choice bits of pathos and philosophy to be found in the columns of work for daily newspapers. A humorous letter for the Brooklyn *Eagle* closed with these words:

Shall I chant something merry for you as I go? It's my nature, you know.

And he followed this invitation to himself with a poem "Under the Purple and Motley", which gives a clearer view into the serious under-current of his nature:

Well might the King wear sackcloth; his were a nation's woes,
And every sob from a million lips was one of his own heart
throes;

The tears of his people burned his cheeks, their hunger gnawed
his breast,

The pain that ached in their hollow eyes drove peace from his
sleepless rest.

But the Jester—who laughed in the palace; who mocked at the
shriveled lips

Of gaunt-eyed Famine and turned aside her moan with his
nimble quips,

Who rippled a stave of a reveller's song, when the woman, with
bitter cry,

Shrieked, "Help, oh King, for God will not!" as the helpless
King passed by;

The Jester—who grinned at the scanty fare they spread at the
royal board,

And tittered a grace, more jest than prayer and more to the
guests than the Lord;

Who wrinkled his face with a wry grimace, while the people
looked aghast

At the sackcloth under the robes of their King, as he went
sadly past.

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The Jester—whose merry gibes were heard in all that doleful
while—
Should he wear sackcloth like the King—why, Famine's self
would smile;
He—light and empty of heart and thought as the jingling bells
he wore—
He would laugh at the sackcloth and jest at the ache of the
heart it covered o'er.

The Jester—Death laughed in his face one day and the smile
on his lips was chilled;
So strange it seemed for him to die, that all the Court was
filled
With ripples of laughter, hushed and low, just tinged with pity
and shame,
But the smiles would come, when they coupled Death with the
frolicsome Jester's name.

So with pitying smiles and hands they dressed the dead for the
Court of Death,
They stripped off his motley—the grotesque rags—and then,
with startled breath—
They looked in amaze, for chafing his breast with its irritant
rankle and sting,
Under his motley the Jester wore the sackcloth—like a King.

CHAPTER X

CALIFORNIA AND PERMANENT CHURCH WORK

DURING a season of lecture engagements, Mr. Burdette came to Eau Claire, Wis., early in 1879, to lecture in a course managed by my husband, Professor N. M. Wheeler, then principal of Eau Claire Seminary. In 1882 he lectured in Appleton, Wis., in a lecture course again managed by Professor Wheeler. A friendship was thus formed between Professor Wheeler and myself and Mr. Burdette, that continued through the years.

Soon after Mrs. Burdette's death in 1884, Mr. Burdette again came to fulfill a lecture engagement at the Winona Lake Assembly, Madison, Wis., bringing with him his little boy, Robin, who was then in white kilts. They were our guests and our little son, Roy Bradley Wheeler, a baby in arms, first saw the man who was in later years to be the "Daddy" of his manhood years.

In 1885, Professor Wheeler and I came to California, he in search of health, which proved to be permanently impaired, and he passed away, December 5, 1886. The friendship which had continued between Mr. Burdette and myself was evidenced by correspondence and interchange of visits, he coming to the coast in 1887, again in 1895 and in 1898. During this last visit, while a guest in my home he was invited to preach a number of times in Southern California, so that it was a most natural thing, following a public announcement early in 1899, that he was coming to Pasadena to live, as I was to become Mrs. Burdette, that the First Presbyterian Church of Pasadena should extend to him an

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

invitation to supply its pulpit which had been vacant for some time. The announcement of his acceptance of the Presbyterian pulpit was made February 13th. This necessitated his cutting his lecture course for the winter somewhat short, that he might come to Pasadena the last of March, which he did, arriving as the temporary guest of Dr. and Mrs. Norman Bridge. Upon my invitation, fourteen friends assembled for breakfast one morning, and were somewhat surprised to find they were also to witness the marriage ceremony, which was conducted by Rev. A. Moss Merwin, a man dearly beloved by us all.

Mr. Burdette's first sermon was preached Easter morning, April, 1899, to a congregation which over-crowded the capacity of the church, and he often said that the floral decorations and the music, prepared with regard for the day and a welcome to him, was one of the most beautiful things his memory could contain. The cordiality with which the Presbyterian people accepted this man of the Baptist faith, and the success with which he drew all men unto him and strengthened the church work from the Sabbath School through all the various departments, was the foreshadowing of his ability to build up the great church of his own faith which was finally to be the scene of the crowning activities of his life.

The fourteen months of service to this church were interrupted by two months of lecture engagements, which were of long standing and which he felt must be fulfilled, but in spite of this his service to this church was so successful that they invited him to become the permanent pastor, though he was not a Presbyterian, but a Baptist. A deep feeling on the part of both Mr. Burdette and myself that while one may be justi-

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fied in evolving from one faith to another, after fifty years of established connection with a given church, a sudden transition was impossible, and the keener sense of the justice to the pastors of the Presbyterian Church who were rightly entitled to so alluring a pastorate, determined Mr. Burdette that he could not for one moment accede to their request. In declining the call and while expressing in warmest terms his appreciation of the Christian fellowship which he had enjoyed, he said:

I am a Baptist; this is a Presbyterian church. If after forty years of service in one denomination I could say to you that in three months I had changed my convictions on certain points of denominational differences, you would doubt the perfect sincerity of that sudden conversion in a man of my years. And I ought to doubt it myself. So long as I live you and I will be loyal friends and cordial yoke-fellows.

Still desirous of having his presence as their pastor, they invited him to become its permanent supply, and he returned a like answer, but consented to remain with the church as its pastor until a proposed European trip.

Just before leaving Pasadena he received from the Session a letter which was to him the richest reward for any service he may have rendered this church of my persuasion:

PASADENA, CAL., May 25, 1900.

To the Reverend Robert J. Burdette.

DEAR BROTHER:

The session of the church being deeply impressed with the excellent results of your labors while acting as our pastor during the year about to close, desire on this occasion to express our gratitude and thankfulness for your uniform faithfulness and tireless zeal in the uplifting of our church and congregation, and for the ennobling Christian influences your teaching has instilled into our individual lives.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

Coming to us as you did at a time when we were without a pastor, you took up the work, and have never faltered in inciting us onward in the acquirement of all those high Christian graces which make up the life of a follower of Christ.

At our mid-week meetings you have ever taught us to seek to show ourselves as high and worthy examples of the true followers of Christ, and in the pulpit your exposition of the scriptures has quickened our sense of Christian duty and Christian living, and broadened and deepened our love for the great truth of the common brotherhood of mankind; and our realization of God's love for his children has often made our hearts to burn within us as you have told us of the great price he has given to redeem us.

Under your pastorate the attendance on our midweek meetings has greatly increased, and on the Sabbath the auditorium is filled by an interested and appreciative audience. A large number, both by letter and by profession have been added to our membership; our church edifice repaired and strengthened; our church debt greatly decreased; our finances are in a highly satisfactory condition; harmony prevails through our borders; our spiritual life is revived; and a greater desire to do good service for the Master possesses our hearts.

And now as we sorrow for your going from among us, we again earnestly and heartily thank you for your efficient service in the Master's cause. Our prayer is that our Heavenly Father may bountifully bestow on you and yours His richest benedictions.

(Signed) ROBERT STRONG,
Moderator pro tem.

W. A. EDWARDS, *Clerk*

C. A. McCORMICK

H. A. HOLME

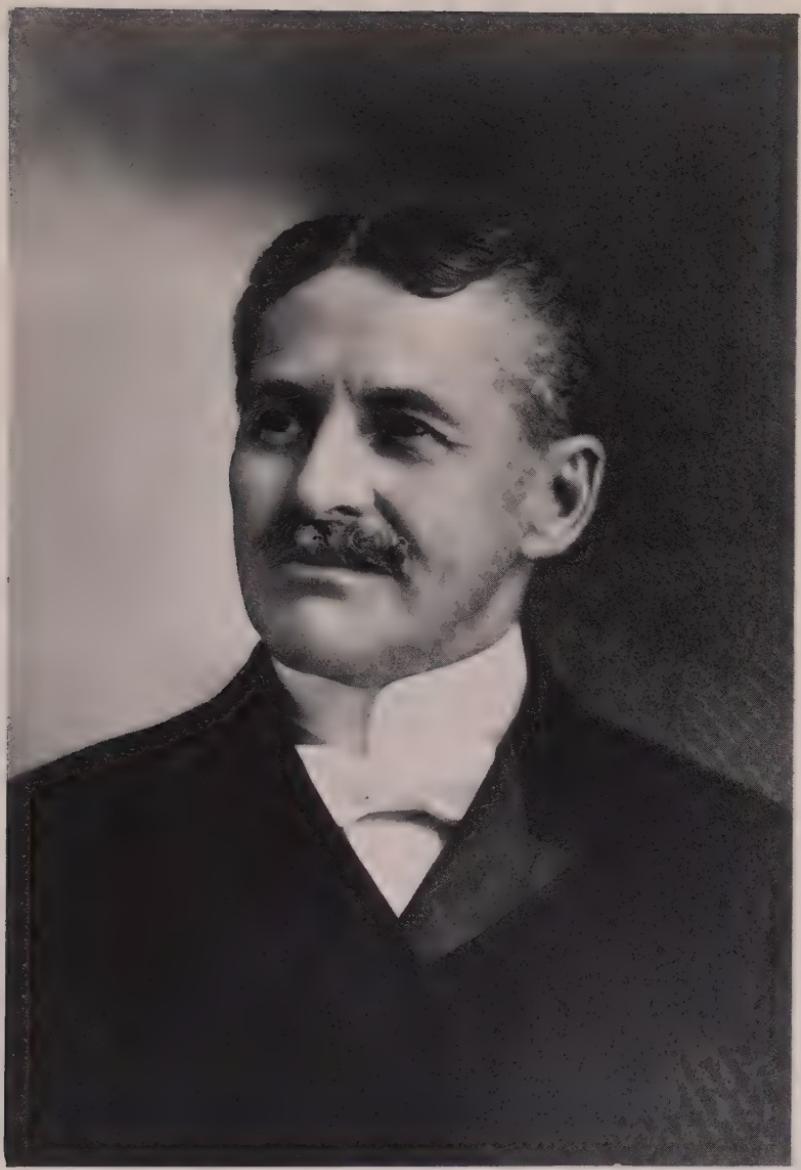
GEO. DEACON

W. S. WINDHAM

N. M. LUTZ

H. N. BALDWIN

This is given to show how generous they were toward him in their acceptance of his leadings, and with what truly Christian doctrine he must have given forth his message to them, because it did not interfere in any way with church doctrine, policy or creed, nor did he step aside from his own in any of the essential



ROBERT J. BURDETTE, AS PREACHER AND PASTOR

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principles of faith. As he often smilingly remarked—he could not sprinkle their babies, but he could at least hold the chalice for some one else to perform this church act.

To quote from his farewell sermon a paragraph inserted into the heart of it, as if this message to the young people was his deepest concern:

Oh, mother, the day will come when your boy will tenderly loose your clinging hands from around his neck, kiss you good-by with your soul on his lips, and turn away to go out into the great wide world with your, his mother's, "God Bless You" for his talisman. What have you done for him? What did you teach him when he was a child? What are you teaching your little ones now, mother? By your lips, by your life, the gospel of your life, by your love for the Word, and the church of God, and your reverence for the Sabbath—what are you teaching the little ones? For I tell you that what you teach them now will come back to them long years after the good-by has been said, as one day it must be. Oh, in the name of Christ give the boy and the girl something to take away from the home, some sacred association, some holy teaching, some pure example of faith and righteousness that all the combined temptations and powers of the world, and sin, and death and hell can never wrest from them—something that will hold them true to you and to God! Then you can smile through the tears of the good-by.

The more intimate message indicates the humility of spirit which was always his, coupled with an unusual courage and daring when the truth was to be proclaimed:

God has made sweet, indeed, to us the fellowship, the comradeship, the dear companionship, of this past year. Every day do I thank God for the friendships that have here been knitted into my life—friendships so loyal and so dear that it seems to me sometimes they must have begun many years ago. I thank you with an overflowing heart for the multiplied kind-

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

nesses you have shown me; for the patience with my blunders, for the love that has blotted out my mistakes; for the partiality of friendship that has chosen to ignore my limitations and overlook very apparent shortcomings; for the kindness that has so sweetly borne with awkward ways.

Whatsoever things there have been in my ministry that "have been just or lovely, or of good report, of any virtue, or of any praise", have been borne out of your own loving hearts that have chosen to "think on these things". Believe me, my heart overflows with all these memories of your goodness and kindness, and through all my life I will carry grateful and loving thoughts of you. Let me, as I bid you farewell, again quote from the great apostle, who says for us so grandly the things we would love to say:

"Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and my crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. And be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love, even as Christ also hath loved us." And "I will return again unto you, if God wills." For myself and for her who, under God's providence, led us into the joy of this great friendship, and for the boy, I bid you farewell. In the sweet benediction of our young people: "The Lord watch between thee and me, when we are absent one from another."

In June, 1900, the older son, Robert J. Burdette, Jr., graduated from Haverford, and the younger son passed his entrance examinations for Harvard at seventeen, with sufficient honors that a year of travel might not be altogether a loss, so we four went abroad for the joy of Mr. Burdette's first trip in foreign lands, for a post-graduate course for the older son, and a better preparation for college life for the younger son, and my joy in all three and a visit to many old scenes of travel.

It was on this, his first ocean going trip, that he wrote a letter to his "flock" and dated it "Some distance out in the damp" and then assured them that—

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the scenery along this route, although somewhat monotonous, is daily irrigated, but it seems too early for growing crops. Nothing has come up yet except on shipboard, and that has gone overboard. The route is not nearly so populous as the Santa Fe trail over the desert. We have just two kinds of days—the days we see a ship and the days we don't.

During the year we spent our time in England; in Scotland; in France during the Paris Exposition; in Switzerland for some months in a châlet at Lucerne; in Italy and Southern Italy for the holiday time; in Egypt up the Nile; to Palestine for a horseback tour; through the Mediterranean to Greece; over to Vienna; back to Paris; to London; to New York; the finest investment that was ever made in a year's time for the preparation of the life work of each of the men. During that time Mr. Burdette contributed weekly letters home, which were printed throughout the United States and which contained some of the most interesting bits of travel description that his fertile imagination and clever pen could portray. These he often began with some little poem which struck the key-note of the letter, and for one of these he wrote the poem that has been more largely republished than any other except the poem "Alone":

"KEEP SWEET AND KEEP MOVIN'"

Homely phrase of our southland bright—
Keep steady step to the flam of the drum;
Touch to the left—eyes to the right—
Sing with the soul tho' the lips be dumb.
Hard to be good when the wind's in the east;
Hard to be gay when the heart is down,
When "they that trouble you are increased",
When you look for a smile and see a frown.
But
"Keep sweet and keep movin'."

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

Sorrow will shade the blue sky gray—
Gray is the color our brothers wore;
Azure will gleam in the skies once more.
Colors of Patience and Hope are they—
Sunshine will scatter the clouds away;
Always at even in one they blend;
Tinting the heavens by night and day,
Over our hearts to the journey's end
Just
“Keep sweet and keep movin'.”

Hard to be sweet when the throng is dense,
When elbows jostle and shoulders crowd;
Easy to give and to take offense
When the touch is rough and the voice is loud;
“Keep to the right” in the city's throng;
“Divide the road” on the broad highway;
There's one way right when every thing's wrong;
“Easy and fair goes far in a day.”
Just
“Keep sweet and keep movin'.”

The quick taunt answers the hasty word—
The lifetime chance for a “help” is missed;
The muddiest pool is a fountain stirred.
A kind hand clenched makes an ugly fist.
When the nerves are tense and the mind is vexed,
The spark lies close to the magazine;
Whisper a hope to the soul perplexed
Banish the fear with a smile serene—
Just
“Keep sweet and keep movin'.”

Mr. Burdette's constant joy at new and unusual scenes was unbounded. His well-stored memory of historic events greatly enriched each scene visited, and his marvelous and accurate familiarity with the Bible made the trip through Palestine a revelation and a source of information and inspiration most unusual.



THE BURDETTE PARTY IN THE HOLY LAND

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Each night as we gathered in the tent, he simply opened the Bible and read to us as if it were a guide book, the events that had taken place in the regions which we had traversed that day. He himself so often gave unconscious evidence in the after years of his sermons of what he absorbed and gave out in most vivifying statements and presentation of gospel truth, based upon historic setting, that I always felt this trip was a providential preparation for the work he was to assume in the later years, so often considered radically different from his previous life work.

His letters to personal friends were to them a "joy forever" and are preserved until this day. A letter to his father from Lucerne, Switzerland, September 19, 1900, described Oberammergau:

And then the day following, we went on to Oberammergau and witnessed its famous "Passion Play", discussed and esteemed in as many ways as there are people who have witnessed it. Whatever you may think of its effect and teaching, you are completely under the power of it while you look and listen.

In the year 1633 a fearful pestilence broke out in the villages of these mountains of Bavaria. It came within nine miles of Oberammergau, in the village of Kohlgrub, where but two married people were left alive, and in spite of all measures began to creep into the village of Oberammergau.

Within 33 days, 84 people died. Then the helpless villagers vowed that if God would take away the pestilence, they would perform the Passion Tragedy in thanksgiving every ten years. "And the Lord repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough; stay now thine hand. And the angel of the Lord was by the threshing place of Arauna, the Jebusite."

And so at Oberammergau, although a number of persons were suffering with the plague when the vow was made, not one died after that. The play was first performed in 1634, and with some interruptions has been performed every ten

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years ever since. It used to be presented in all simplicity out of doors, in the churchyard, but of late years the increasing attendance of tourists has necessitated other arrangements. The "simple-minded villagers" have builded an auditorium seating 4000 persons; at one end it is entirely open; the stage is out of doors and there is a little space between the stage and the auditorium, yet so perfect are the acoustics of this oddly constructed house that every word from the stage is heard clearly throughout the edifice. That is one wonder.

Another is, that these peasants, villagers, wood carvers and servants, move on the stage with grace, majesty, dignity, such as you rarely see in the pulpit or on the stage; there is nothing affected or "stagey" about one of them. For the time, each one seems to be the character he portrays. Another thing: The play, which is a dramatic presentation of the closing-week of the Saviour's life before the crucifixion, following the Gospel story, is 8 hours on the stage, there being an interval of an hour and a quarter at noon—two acts of 4 hours each. All that time the audience is held with almost breathless interest; there is no talking; no whispering; few people go out; it is wonderful.

Now try to imagine any theatrical manager presenting an attraction that would hold any audience 8 hours. It couldn't be done. And the play has not a ripple of mirth, not one ray of humor. It is earnest as life, solemn as death all the way through. The scenes are lived over before you. The "Last Supper" is the tenderest thing that I ever saw. Robbie sobbed like a child over it, and the man had to be callous-hearted who could sit through that scene dry-eyed. The play lasted all Sunday from 8 A. M. to 5.30 P. M., and then the rush for the cafés, in the little shops and on the sidewalks everywhere, was tremendous, and the consumption of wine and beer went on like a torrent till nine o'clock at night; maybe later; I went to sleep then.

This also is a comment on the moral effect of the play. However, that didn't mean what it would in America. These people drink wine and beer as we drink water. And right here—you will hear people tell you they had to drink wine and beer in Europe because they could get no water. I haven't seen a table in hotel, restaurant, or "pension" (you call that

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pon-se-on, with the accent on the “pon”, it means “boarding-house”) where the drinking water was not served as it is in America. And the water is good, too; better than you get in Philadelphia; doesn’t have to be boiled any more than it does in Chicago. That excuse is a lie in every letter; four drink nothing but water, and never have the slightest trouble getting it. Americans who drink wine and beer in Europe do so because they want to, not because they have to.

To Erasmus Wilson he wrote from Rome, December, 17, 1900:

DEAR MAN,

By the time this reaches you, the 19th and 20th centuries will have settled their dispute, so here’s a Happy New Year and A Happy New Century to you—the only man I know who is big enough to require a whole century for a New Year greeting. And it won’t be a mis-fit, either. If you had all of the New Century allotted to you that you deserve, there would be 200 years in it, and every day will be Christmas.

Well, you’ll get all that—Christmases and all, “one of these days”. What a long day it will be—with the sun always hanging about half-past five—waiting for the twilight that comes after “office hours”—the time when “school is out” and the children go trooping home.

We gray-haired old boys, going slowly up the long slope of the hill over which the sun is resting, and behind which is home—and the twilight—and the stars. Won’t you be glad when “School is out”, dear old Boy? I will, and I won’t. For I’ve got to carry my books home. They’re badly “dog’s eared”, but I won’t mind that; that comes of study. And they’re torn pretty badly, but I won’t mind that; I got that done fighting. But there’s ink marks and stains on so many pages. That I’m sorry for—there’s no excuse for that. Good-bye! Just got to thinkin’ of you, and sat down to send you a hail and I’ve turned it into a wail. A Long Happy New Year.

Yours as ever,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

To his father he wrote from Venice, concerning the fall elections:

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

November 6th, 7 P. M. Well, you haven't got through the battle yet, it is about 11 A. M. in Chicago—the difference in time is eight hours, but we are safe in Venice. This morning I prepared four ballots for McKinley and Roosevelt, and we all four, including the minor and the woman, marched solemnly across the piazzeta, which is a part of St. Mark's Square, and gravely deposited our ballots in the Royal Italian letter box under the shadow of the Doges' Palace and the column of St. Mark's. This evening we know that McKinley's majority in Venice is four over all, and Bryan hasn't got a vote in this silver stronghold. And it is silver, sure enough. The rate of exchange on gold is about sixteen per cent.

I am incubating a new lecture. I call it "Rainbow Chasers". I'm one. The "aig" is fair to look upon, but you never can tell what may happen to a negg. Duck, maybe, when you want a fighting cock, or a tiny little piccolo of a bantam, when you prayed for a great basso-profundo of a Shanghai that could eat his corn off the head of a barrel.

Returning to Paris and a visit to Versailles, his father received, under date of May 7, 1901, a letter in which Mr. Burdette graphically portrays the Continental Sunday as he saw it:

And every time the grand fountain plays, it costs the Republic of France 10,000 francs. So you see? Fountains and fountains and fountains—statues of marble and bronze—nymph and triton and god—art and beauty and grace—ah, but they are beautiful. The jets of the Grandes Eaux are 75 feet high. There is nothing—at least no single piece equal to the MacMonnies fountain at our Columbian Fair. But the number and variety of them, scattered through the beauty of this beautiful park, makes you "doubt if Eden were more fair".

Thirty-five thousand people were gathered around the fountain. About a thousand or fifteen hundred private soldiers of all arms of the service were scattered among them. Not armed, but on their holiday. Although all soldiers here in Europe wear their side arms all the time, the troopers and artillery-men their sabers, and the infantry men their bayonets, you never see one without them.

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These people wandered thro' the picture galleries and about the gardens all day, and thronged about the fountains when they began to play. They gathered around them half an hour before they began. A quiet, orderly decorous crowd. No drunkenness. Not a drunken or a noisy man in the throng. No shouting. No rowdyism. No boisterous conduct. I couldn't see or hear anything un-Sunday like in the park. Well, yes, I did too.

I remembered how Sunday after Sunday the tally-hos drive out from Los Angeles, loaded with tourists and Los Angeles people; how they drive thro' Pasadena, blowing horns and shouting, disturbing the service in every church past which they drive, and making more noise in half an hour than I heard all day Sunday long in the Park at Versailles. I don't think that we can safely introduce the French Sunday into America. I don't think, as a whole, the French Sunday is so good as our own. But, I do think that some features of it far surpass some features of our own.

It makes a man a much better American to spend a year among other peoples. It also increases his respect for the other peoples. And it convinces him that while we know the most, we don't know it all. There wasn't a band in the park. Not a blare or a bray of a horn, to amuse all that crowd of people. And not a bar. And not a beer-stand.

I tell you what, that Sunday in Versailles Park made a great big finger dent in my mind. I haven't got over thinking of it yet. It was without one exception, the quietest, most orderly, best behaved crowd of that size I ever saw in my life.

Returning to America, the older boy took up newspaper work and the younger boy entered Harvard in the class graduating in 1905. Mr. Burdette and I returned to California, with the plan that he should take up work in his own study, doing more truly literary work and less public work, to the end that there might be an output in permanent form of expression of his literary gifts such as he had been unable hitherto to compile.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

But it seemed as if Providence was ordering things otherwise. This dream of the years when he should be able to devote his time to this so-called higher style of literature was not to be fulfilled, for soon after our return, a committee waited upon him to inform him that a certain group of Baptists of Los Angeles were considering the formation of a new church, upon the provision that he would consent to become their pastor. There seemed to be a legitimate field for a new church in spite of the number of Baptist churches already there, because of a large number of unattached Baptists, and those who for personal reasons were unhappy in their church relationships, and the appeal was made to him that here was a service for which he had distinctive gifts, the ability to love them into harmony.

This was a very serious undertaking at his time of life. He had passed what was then called the "dead line" of the pulpit, and had had little experience in all that goes to make a successful pastor. It involved giving up of a life of comparative ease for one of strenuous activity, with the distance intervening between his home in Pasadena and the scene of his church activity in Los Angeles.

I, who was afterwards to be known as the "Presbyterian wife of the Baptist Pastor", felt that he alone must make the decision. I had no right to stand in the way of what might be under God his largest life opportunity for service. My only expression concerning the suggestion was simply to the end that if he, after proper consideration, felt that this was the work for him to do, I would with all my power assist him, but the problem was his and I suggested that he consider it for ten days.

At the end of the week he came to me, saying, "I have prayerfully considered this matter and feel it is

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the work for me to undertake, but I cannot do it without your intimate help. You are so capable to supply my lack of executive ability and organization experience, that I cannot attempt it unless you are willing to make the sacrifice which I feel I have no right to ask of you."

There was but one answer to be made and the opportunity was given me to demonstrate my oft-asserted belief that there is no greater work given to a wife to do than to help her husband make a success of a great life undertaking.

So "the church which we builded together" became the most precious thing in his life, save his loved ones, and the last to fade from memory as life itself was waning.

This decision to turn from the ease of self-imposed tasks at his desk, environed by the comforts of leisure home life, and assume responsibilities that were new, that were necessarily to be demanding and constantly insistent, that multiplied with every new accomplishment, was destined to open the way for what he declared should be "the crowning work of my life".

Bubbling over with love for mankind, rich in the understanding of human needs and human weaknesses, master of the art of arousing the sympathies and emotions, he not only played upon the vibrant strings of the human heart as a Jester does his bells, but the very chords of the soul he touched with the stroke of spiritual genius, and his sweetness of life and gospel left an inheritance of love to his fellowmen. He preached the living word. He vitalized and made modern old truths. He radiated sunshine, and men followed the light. He was the inspiration for Temple Baptist Church; he was the inspiration of Temple Baptist Church. No pastor

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was more deeply loved than was he, and no people ever received the outpouring and wealth of affection that he bestowed on "my children", many of whom in turn called him "Padre".

Two questions are often asked and naturally so, "Why did Robert J. Burdette leave the lecture platform to become a preacher and what is his creed?" He has answered them himself in this fashion—that he was not drawn to the pulpit by any love of ease, for the lyceum with its changing audiences, its shifting scenes of travel, and the half-dozen lectures that would last the rest of his life-time was far lighter work than the pulpit with its demand for two new sermons each week, and its daily round of pastoral duties making heavy drains upon strength of body, brain, soul and sympathy.

Nor was it for hope of gain, for the income for the lyceum winter far surpassed the annual salary of the pastorate. Moreover, he was just ready for a few years' rest, and had passed the "ministerial dead line" of fifty years. Why should he enter the ministry with never a day of so-called theological education or seminary training? A half-organized Church waiting upon his answer cried, "Come!" People whom he thought he might help in their troubles, and cares, and doubts, and sorrows, called to him, "Come!" And the voice of God whispered in his soul, "Go!"

This same spirit was breathed in a sentence uttered in a prayer after he became a pastor, uttered perhaps unconsciously to himself, which has lived in the mind of one listener as the exponent of his call to the ministry: "O Lord, we would reach one hand up to Thee and one down to poor, fallen, struggling humanity and thus draw each to the other." And his creed? Again he

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makes answer, “‘Love is the fulfillment of the Law.’ Love, and love alone brought Jesus Christ from heaven to men; and only love can lift men to heaven.”

When asked what was his secret for attracting men his deep-meaning reply was, “Preaching the simple Gospel. Men do not want philosophical treatises and literary essays; they want more evangelism.”

Again, Mr. Burdette declared:

I believe in old-fashioned preaching, but old-fashioned preaching is not obsolete preaching. When this kind of preaching was new it was up-to-date. It drew lessons from every-day life—what more do we. Illustrate with stories some other people like—not always the kind that will pleasure yourself. Some people once explained to me about the binding of a very old book until I began to go to sleep. Then to save myself, I began to talk about the inside of the book and they went to sleep. If occasion comes to use humor, do so. I would rather make people laugh than cry. They do enough crying any way. If you want to use such little extravagancies of speech as “The everlasting hills melt away” there is no harm. What you want is to catch the interest of your audience and make the people listen. Then tell them the simple story of the Gospel in a manner that will convince them.

And in an article contributed by him to a religious publication he says under the caption, “This same Jesus”:

“I believe the greatest theme on earth at this time is the study, the declaration and exaltation of the character and divinity of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of men, the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity. There is that in the description and proclamation, the divine and human portraiture of Jesus that awakens the sincerest interest in the human mind, the tenderest love in the human heart, and the profoundest reverence in the human soul. Jesus Christ and Him crucified and glorified, His humanity and His Divinity—this be our theme. Men will respond to this, to the presentation of the personality of Jesus Christ as they will to no other thought.”

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These deep and spiritual convictions were not born of the moment. They were the harvest of the years of God's spirit working within the human soul.

Though called upon suddenly to take up this crowning work of his life, he possessed preparation for it by the enrichment of a life of varied experiences and by a legacy from his Baptist ancestors of two centuries of pulpit orators.

That his first ministry should be the denomination of his father, was the fulfillment of his reply to a young preacher who once asked him why he was a Baptist:

I am a Baptist by heredity. My Welsh ancestors were Baptist preachers, and there has been an unbroken line of Baptist preachers in the family down to the present day. And my father's people were Baptists of the old Huguenot stock. If I wanted to be any other than a Baptist I couldn't be. I was born one. I love the Universalists and the Russians, I love the Congregationalists and Prussians and Methodists; I love the Presbyterians and the English; but I was born a Baptist and an American, and that settles it.

Moreover, I love the beautiful symbolism of the ordinance of the Baptist church. I love a baptism that does not have to be argued, defended or explained, but is in itself such a living picture of burial and resurrection that even a blind eye must close itself if it would not see. And I love the creed that is written nowhere but in the New Testament, which allows for growth—which, indeed, demands steady growth. I love the simplicity of the Baptist organization. I love the democratic churches. And I love the Baptist recognition of the right of “private judgment”, the liberty of personal opinion. I love the free responsibility of the human soul, standing face to face with God, with no shadow of pope or bishop or priest or man-made creed falling between himself and his Maker. That's why I am a Baptist.

Temple Baptist Church, organized by laymen with a layman called to be its pastor (for Mr. Burdette was then only licensed and had not yet been ordained), was

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to be known as a laymen's church and destined for a unique history.

To say that Temple Baptist Church was organized with 285 charter members and grew under his pastorate to be 1069 strong, with a congregation of three thousand people twice every Sunday; to say that the Sunday School started fully officered and organized with 175 pupils and 18 officers and teachers the first morning and grew to nearly 1000 in six years; to indicate the "wanderings in the wilderness" from the occupancy of the recently vacated Congregational Church with a seating capacity of only 1200, the old Hazard's Pavilion which was finally to be demolished that the new church home might be constructed, the worship meanwhile in the crowded old Masonic Temple, which again forced a march to the Los Angeles armory building where for six uncomfortable months worship was maintained with ever-increasing membership, to the final dedication of Berean Hall in Temple Auditorium, is to present only a meager outline of the faith, courage and marvelous activity which the young church established in the heart of the business life of a great, growing city.

In Mr. Burdette's first sermon before this new group of already loyal workers and worshippers, delivered July 26, 1903, preaching from the text, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love Thee", he bade them—

come to this church, bring with you love, and peace, and the name of Christ, and you shall depart in peace and love. Come here with the hurts of your life; come with the bitterness of your defeats; come with the smart of your disappointments, with the crumbling hopes that lie in ashes. Come with us, and prayer and blessing shall meet you at the Threshold, the one as sweet as the other is sure. "They shall prosper that love Thee."

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With the first service the Diadem was sung, as we had heard it sung in England, and from that time to this the morning service is opened with the Diadem, which carries the mind like a shaft of sunlight to the upper skies.

Rev. George Thomas Dowling, then rector of Christ Episcopal Church, early made public his congratulations to the citizens of Los Angeles in general and Baptist churches in particular, on the acquisition to the city clergy of Mr. Burdette, saying:

He stands for that which we all need, whether in the church or out of it, perhaps as much as anything else—personified sunshine. For twenty years I have known him in the East. We have traveled together, eaten together, slept together, and lectured together; and of all the men whom I have ever known, I have never met one more kindly toward everyone, more tender in his judgments of the weak and the fallen, more like the Master whom he preaches.

With this nature as a background of all effort, there is little wonder that he was instrumental in bringing the answer of his own earnest and oft-repeated prayer, "Dear Father, make this a spiritual church, controlled by love".

Up to this time Mr. Burdette had been only a licensed preacher of the Baptist Church and both himself and his people desiring full ordination, a council was called and a date fixed for considering the recognition of the church and the ordination of the pastor, August 13, 1903, the council consisting of 47 delegates representing 38 churches and 30 pastors and 8 visitors, who formally recognized the Temple Baptist Church and before a crowded auditorium confirmed Mr. Burdette's qualifications for the pulpit and assured fitness for the pastorate.

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Mr. Burdette always maintained that the Baptist Church stood pre-eminently for soul liberty, for the freedom of conscience and individual opinion, and he emphasized his beliefs when those examining him pressed him for the stereotyped seminary answers to the usual test questions.

Here was a new experience for most of these churchmen—to question one who handled more audiences in a year than they had in all their ministry, who had moved more hearts in one lecture season than they had looked down upon in all their preaching years, and who fearlessly answered their questions with surprising frankness.

Little wonder that when some impossible theological question was asked, the wit of the candidate carried him over all the rough places to the occasional discomfiture of his examiners.

During the cross-examination from the floor, which was long and exacting, occasional flashes of humor came to the surface that reminded the brethren with whom they were dealing and enlivened the proceedings to a delightful degree.

One dignified brother asked the candidate a question on a knotty point, and he answered: "I do not know; can you answer that question yourself?"

"I answered that question twenty years ago at my own ordination," said the dignified brother.

"But I was not there to hear it," was the quick reply.

It was about at this stage that Dr. A. J. Frost rose up to the full height of his majestic 6 feet 4 inches, and, in his terrible bass voice, remarked: "It ought to be understood that no one is to ask a question in this council that he is not able to answer himself."

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This of course brought down the house.

Mr. Burdette admitted that his views as to the final disposition of the wicked dead were not exactly in accord with commonly accepted views on that point among Baptists, and that his private interpretation of questions concerning communion were such as were held by the English Baptists. This latter opinion he elucidated in a sermon a month later, on the text "This do in remembrance of me", in which he said:

A "sacrament" we call the "Lord's Supper", that is, a sign and an oath, "sacramentum"—the oath of allegiance which the Roman soldier took on his enlistment. It is "an outward and visible sign of an inward grace"; the pledge by which we bind our souls to the Lord. And we call it the "Lord's Supper", because it was instituted by our dear Lord Jesus; it was at the evening time, and at the close of the Passover supper.

We call it "the communion" because here we commune with Christ and His people, our brethren; it is spoken of as the "Eucharist", "a thanksgiving", because in the institution of it, Jesus gave thanks as He broke the bread and poured the wine. He did not "bless" the bread and wine. Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us of the institution of the supper, and Paul tells how by special revelation he also received of the Lord Jesus the story of the supper and the manner of its observance. John gives us conversation and the last discourse.

And among the many sweet and beautiful ideas which cluster about this, the holiest place on earth, there occurs to you the social thought; it is the assembling of the household of faith; at the Lord's table; upon His own invitation. The gathering of the family.

We sit here side by side with brothers and sisters whose faces, it may be, we have never seen before, and whom we may never meet again until our Lord shall drink the fruit of the vine new with us in His Father's kingdom; yet are we all of the one household. At no other place in all the worship and service of the church are thoughts of denominational differences of creed and method of ordinance pushed farther away from our hearts. It is His table; and we, present ourselves as

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His guests, come with no thought in our hearts save of the love of Jesus, our crucified and risen Saviour, who meets with us.

He was ordained in spite of the sentiment expressed on the part of one of the church papers in reporting the council meeting, which said:

Questions are supposed to issue from the council to the candidate and not from the candidate to the council. We do not remember to have heard of a case, heretofore, where one professing to hold views of baptism and the supper differing from those of the denomination at large in this country, was ordained to the ministry. It is allowed laymen to hold different views, provided they do not attempt to propagate them; but it is not allowed candidates for the ministry to profess them at ordination.

Mr. Burdette made a most favorable impression before the council. His account of his conversion and call to the ministry was so simple, and true to the best traditions, that all hearts were deeply moved. His statement of doctrines and church polity was not made in the language of the schools, but showed clearly that the candidate was familiar with his Bible and was true as steel to the great fundamental facts of inspiration, God's sovereign love, Jesus receiving penalty in the sinner's stead, the efficacy of the atoning blood, and the absolute necessity of a converted church membership.

Rev. A. J. Frost performed the ceremony of "Laying on of hands" and delivered the charge to the Pastor. He smilingly said: "Never be ashamed of being a Baptist. You are a Baptist. I thank God that what there is of you is Baptist."

The learned Doctor is perhaps the largest man physically in the whole Baptist communion; and Mr. Burdette stood 5 feet 4 inches. So when this great

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man, from his towering height, looked down upon the new preacher, it could not fail to cause some amusement, but the people of Temple Church declared they would not have exchanged the “Little Minister”. No! Not for the biggest man in the world!

The benediction was pronounced by Rev. Robert J. Burdette, and this man, known as editor, humorous lecturer, poet, writer, soldier, as well as an exponent of many other lines of life, stood changed—or unchanged according to the verdict of the outer or inner life—into a regular Baptist preacher. Three years later he was to have conferred upon him by the Theological Seminary of Kalamazoo the degree of Doctor of Divinity, thus rounding out a long life of rich and varied experiences.

Through three years of wandering, made necessary by the ever-increasing congregations which overflowed each auditorium secured for church services, and under the most distracting conditions a young church ever experienced, Mr. Burdette's optimism, cheer and faith led them joyously, following the motto he early gave them, “Keep sweet and keep moving”.

When Berean Hall, which was destined to be a prayer-meeting room, Sunday School room and general working center of Temple Church, was dedicated July 29, 1906, the pastor, standing on the platform, faced a happy-hearted audience and preached the dedication sermon with the sunshine of his own heart shining through the windows of his soul. There was a feeling that it might have been this occasion that inspired Julian Hawthorne to write:

Mr. Burdette has the look of a man who is happy in his work. All true work lovingly done is good. But the work of the Christian Minister, in spite of all those professors of it who have

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swerved from the direct path, or who have listened to strange counsels, or compromised in one way or another with the enemy, is still the highest work of all, for whose who are competent to do it. The man who is happy in it must therefore be a man with a genuine message, to whom it is worth one's while to listen, who merits respect.

And when the inward call has been so powerful as to draw him away in mature years from an established place and path in life, it seems to give him a distinction altogether exceptional. From ancient down to modern times, there have never been lacking men of this distinction and their renown is part of history. Mr. Burdette was of their company. And those who listened to his voice might well believe that a truth found utterance through him, purer and sounder than often heard from latter day pulpits.

It was this “little man, born with the genius for loving”, that made possible the three years’ history which could be thus condensed:

Temple Church, born amid adverse circumstances, without a name, without a home, without a pastor, she today, after three years’ wilderness journey, stands within the walls of her own home, beautiful for situation, with a name known far and near, a pastor beloved in many lands, her back to the struggles of the past and her face to the glorious future that God has marked out for her if she but follow Him. “Only be strong and very courageous for the Lord my God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.”

At the dedication of the Auditorium itself by the Temple Baptist Church, who took possession of it as their Sabbath home Sunday morning, November 1, 1908, Mr. Burdette used these words, which might have been an epitome of his own efforts through life:

To the sweetest ministry of music; to the highest ideals of art; to the education of the body, mind and soul; to the training of the best citizenship and the truest patriotism; to the strongest manhood and the purest womanhood; to the brother-

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hood of man, the fellowship of righteousness, the fatherhood of God, and the teaching and living of the whole gospel of Jesus Christ, His Son, the Saviour of Men; to the training of all that is best and truest in daily toil, in wholesome recreation, innocent amusement, and Sabbath rest and worship; to the sacred unity of the home; to the holiness of family ties; to the promotion of temperance, chastity, truth and righteousness, we, the congregation of Temple Baptist church, dedicate this house. In the name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

This dedication was followed by such a petition that there seemed to be the commitment of God and man to the great purpose:

Thou Great Master of the Temple, we pray for a blessing wide as Thy mercy and deep as Thy love upon this Church of Thy planting. Be Thou its eternal Refuge, Dear God, the Mighty. A shadow from the heat, a shelter from the storm. Enfold it in Thy enduring love as with a garment of light. Make it abide in Thy love, Dear Christ Jesus, our Saviour. May it ever dwell under the blessings of Thy cross, in the shelter of Thy Arms. Be Thou to it a shield in the day of battle; a guide in the weary maze of the wilderness of doubts and fears. Keep it from the evil of the world. Teach it day by day to labor in Thy words, to rest in Thy prayers. Make its way bright with faith, its burdens light with love. Teach it to pray, Dear Lord. Teach it to live. Teach it to love. May it gaze so constantly on Thy face that its face will grow into Thy likeness, not by the change of death, Dear Lord, but by the transforming power of the highest, noblest, purest and truest life. Thy blessing forever upon this dear Church.

The power of the word and the preacher behind it, and that without sensational attractions, drew more than capacity audiences, and the necessity, even with this increased seating capacity, of turning people away from each service Sunday after Sunday, was a constant regret to Mr. Burdette; not that he vainly wished to have record-breaking congregations, but that with

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simple spiritual earnestness he prayerfully sought to "draw all men unto Him" whom he loved and served. That his prayer was not in vain was proven through the years of his pastorate by the fact that every baptismal Sunday found candidates ready for baptism; every prayer-meeting night new applicants were presented for membership and every communion Sunday large numbers received the right hand of fellowship.

That this Sunday home of Temple Church was in an auditorium, used for other purposes during the week, brought from those who cared much for conventional material church buildings, honest words of criticism. While it was true that the Sunday School rooms, the parlors, the club-rooms and the workshop of the church were for the church only and that there were 126 offices in the building, rented for the most part to physicians, that there might be an assured income for the Auditorium Company, the members of Temple Church owning less than one-third of the stock of the company—this double use of the auditorium was not all that might be desired by those whose church homes had been closed to the public all but one day in the week. Mr. Burdette's years of peculiar training fitted him, as few preachers were ever prepared, to overcome all these unusual conditions and to turn the very difficulties of the situation to great advantage.

The church activities which could so bless the community life of the downtown heart of a great city were thus directed by one preeminently fitted to attract and hold the transient, homeless people, as well as those who permanently abided within the city; for was he not often called "Pilgrim's Progress Mr. Great Heart?" Mr. Burdette's reply to these critics was given in a sermon on "Consecrated Places", and is so character-

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istic of his attitude towards life, his fearlessness of “the brethren”, and his fighting spirit in the cause of righteousness, that I quote at length:

Last week a man sent me this message: “How dare you presume to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ in a theater?”

I don’t preach in a theater. I would like to, sometimes, but the theater people will not permit it. I preach the gospel in a fitting place. We are assembled this moment in what is commonly called a church. This is a consecrated house of worship, consecrated, so far as man can consecrate any place, by the speaking lips and reverent hearts of 3000 people, “to the brotherhood of man, the fellowship of righteousness, the fatherhood of God, the teaching and living of the whole gospel of Jesus Christ, His Son, our Saviour.” I not only dare preach that gospel anywhere, but I must preach it everywhere.

God called Moses to his mighty mission out of the flaming acacia bush in the desert, without first having the bush consecrated and the ground made holy by an organization of men and women with psalm and chant, with liturgy and ritual and with words of consecration falling from human lips with all the pomp and humility, the splendor and simplicity of a religious service.

We come together sometimes, we men, to build a house to the name of God and we say it shall be sacred to holy things, to holy thoughts and to holy lives. To that end we hold a solemn assemblage at the laying of the corner stone and a service of consecration when the sacred edifice is completed. With words of praise and hearts of reverence we do all that is in human power to make the building sacred to His name, and we go home satisfied that we have consecrated the house of God; we have, we, with hearts that are sometimes foul, sometimes black dens of evil thoughts and low desires, minds that are at times charnel houses of ignorance; we have consecrated a church, we have made a house holy.

Men consecrated a house to God one time—the first house ever builded to His name and under His own direction. They made it as holy as men could make anything, with song and praise and music of instruments, with ascription of righteous-



THE AUDITORIUM, LOS ANGELES, HOME OF TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH

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ness and holiness to God, with a high priest slaying the sacrifice, offering the people's oblation, the sin offering, the sacrifice of peace offerings, fire from God consuming all that was offered upon the altar, and in an instant the service turned into an hour of terror by the flame of Jehovah's wrath devouring the sons of the high priest, who had offered strange fire before the altars. The unholiness of men carrying strange fire in their hearts, false worship in their souls, hypocrisy in their thoughts, can make unholy the holiest place that human hands have formally consecrated to divine worship and service.

I suppose that the people who object to religious services in the Auditorium can see nothing holy, sacred or pure around the corner of First and Main Streets, or down on Azusa Street, anywhere in the slum district, amidst a cordon of saloons, of vile houses populated with vile people, localities given over to vice in its lowest form. But I have seen, and any one may see, those places made holy, consecrated to God even as the white altar, radiant in its illuminating candles in a grand cathedral, by a little circle of the children of God, a song of praise and entreaty shouted amidst the noises of the street on a week night by untrained voices, a girl in the dress of a Salvation Army lassie, kneeling in the street and praying for the careless, sneering throng hurrying by her on the way to the theater or saloon or gaming house. That is consecrated ground.

Here is a dance hall, viler and lower than mere human imagination can paint it in its degradation and sin, and into it, without the prayers of consecration by a titled dignitary, without the services of a recognized church, comes a man whose own unholy, drink-sodden body God has transformed into a beautiful temple of the Holy Spirit, and Jerry McCauley's Mission will live forever in the record of the churches that "overcome". He preached where sin most abounded, that grace might still more abound.

Do you remember the old "Pavilion", that came to be best known as the home of prize fights? Do you remember where it stood? Somehow, when I speak of it, I always have to stop and think where it was. Do you remember its old reputation, when it was the only home of prize fighting, dog shows, chicken shows, any old thing that was dirty and noisy and smelly, in Los Angeles? What is this great concourse of

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pilgrims from all over America, from the distant continent and the islands of the sea converging toward the old Pavilion? It is the great General Methodist Conference, and it occupies the old barracks for a month, without any other consecration service than the very essential one of oceans of water and islands of soap! Wasn't it a holy place during the hallelujah sessions of that conference of God's people?

Then Chapman, the Presbyterian, came into it with his soldiers of the cross, and we all wrought and prayed with him and his yoke fellows. Sinners were saved; God's name was glorified. Wasn't it holy then? Campbell Morgan, with his rare, pure spirituality, came into it and all the churches of Los Anglees sat under the blessedness of his ministry and the saints were strengthened in the faith and made glad in the Lord. Wasn't it holy then? Then Frederick B. Meyer came over from London, and he preached the gospel of our Lord with ineffable sweetess and light, and our souls were lifted up into heavenly places in Christ Jesus as we listened. Wasn't it a holy place then? Wasn't it a fit place in which to preach the gospel of salvation?

Chapman, Morgan, Meyer, Bishop McCabe, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, all preached the gospel and brought sinners to Christ in it. Then, October 18, 1904, the last brutal prize fight was fought in it. The old Pavilion was jammed to the roof. Profanity and obscenity, yells of applause or derisions from the lips of half drunken men roared through the crazy old barracks.

Then a little band of Christian men and women, strong in faith and rich in love, bought the building; with stronger faith they tore it down, and this glittering gem of beauty and grace in the coronet of Los Angeles is an answer to the prayer! Dare I preach the gospel of the Blessed Lord in this Temple of light and loveliness? So long as I may, I will! And let the man who cries out against it, go down on Azusa Street, buy some dive he can find down there, tear it down and on its unholy ruins build for the good of men and the glory of God a Temple of Grace like this! Then he may talk!

In this day of specialists and specialization, every corporation and organization seeks the man who can
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do best one thing and do one thing best. It seems left to the churches—at least, a vast majority of them—to seek the man who can do best everything and then expect him to do everything best. He must not only be the best preacher in town and the best pastor, but there must be no one else who can bury their dead, marry their living, visit the sick, comfort those in trouble, represent them at all conventions and assemblies, deliver addresses for all departments of the Church, keep in touch with all the outside activities that the Church should be a factor in, and, finally, as at the beginning, he must be the best sermonizer in the community.

This Mr. Burdette did and more, but with marvelous physical powers in spite of his over-strenuous life up to this his sixty-third year. With great versatility of talent and the rare ability to respond instantly to utterly divergent demands, it became a physical impossibility for him longer to administer the affairs of a parish the territory of which covered more ground than the state of Rhode Island and whose members numbered well toward a thousand souls. In 1907 an assistant pastor, Rev. Edwin Rawson Brown, was called to the yoke-fellowship in the work, and at the close of his first year of service Mr. Burdette's heartiness and generosity of spirit were shown in his report to the Church.

The “Open Door” to the Pastor’s study on Wednesday afternoons, was possibly a greater service to those “unattached” than to Temple members, and in the records kept there is found the names of those who repeatedly came for help, especially the names of young men.

The letter of deep appreciation for encouragement

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“along the way”, a kind word, a cheery bit of advice, a helpful deed, would fill a volume, and are worthy of one because of their deep sincerity. “It was such a little thing to do,” the Pastor would say; “but it meant everything to me,” was the universal reply.

Mr. Burdette felt most intensely that in estimating values by human life and human activities the richest asset the church had was its children and its young people. He feared for the child that was without the Sunday School habit because of the peril of forming less desirable habits and he earnestly prayed, “give us the children”; make us all Bereans, that we may “search the scriptures” daily.

Upon his suggestion that a Baptist Sunday School was the Navy of the Lord, the superintendent, T. T. Woodruff, enthusiastically took up the idea and organized the Sunday School along nautical lines. The pastor, who was to be known as the Admiral, co-operated heartily; it fired his fancy and imagination and many a delightful nautical talk did he build for them. One is vividly remembered, “Sailing by Chart”, which easily carries its own scriptural lesson, but which was applied with such perfect nautical terms as to call for enthusiastic comment. The “chart” was the Bible charting the shores; the islands, the shallows, rocks, the probable derelicts, the revolving lights of “Watch and Pray”, the bell buoys of “Duty” and “Service”, and his closing words were:

So glad that we belong to the Navy of the Lord. So glad that the good ship “Temple Bible School” has the best captain that ever walked the quarter deck—good bluff and tough, rough and ready old Commodore Woodruff—God bless his tarry top lights. I hope so long as this is a Bible School it will never drop the nautical figure he invented for us. And what other



"SUNNYCREST," THE HOME OF DR. AND MRS. BURDETTE AT PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

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school has such a naval constructor, such a Yankee ship-builder as "our own Leslie McClure"? our own "Chips"? He's equal to any thing that can float, from a life raft to a battleship. Such a ship and such a crew; always willing; always loyal; always obedient and prompt, for everything at sea goes on the run and jump—the safety of the ship often depends upon punctuality and promptness, especially when we're tacking ship off shore in a dangerous place, with teacher and every boy and girl sailor at their stations, when the order "full and by" changes to "full for stays", and

The ship bends lower before the breeze
As her broadside fair to the blast she lays,
And she swifter springs to the rising seas,
As the pilot calls, "Stand by for stays".

The Elementary Department was his special delight. "The Babies" were very near his heart and often he was heard to say, "Whoever has to be neglected by the Pastor, the Babies must never be"; and every Sunday morning the hour for leaving his home in Pasadena was jealously guarded, that he might not be too late to see "the blessed babies" before they were dismissed. He always had a little message for them to which they gave a welcoming wave of their little hands or sang him a good morning song that brought tears to his eyes and sunshine to his heart. One of the tenderest poems he ever penned begins and ends:

Dear little Buds in the Garden of God,
Tenderly growing by night and by day;

Jesus of Bethlehem! Keep them thine own,
Sweet as Thy childhood in Nazareth town.

All young life was precious to this man whose heart continued to "beat forever like a boy's" and who knew so well how to "keep the dew of youth" and the opti-

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mism of childhood. In his talks, in his secular writings, and in his sermons he pleaded with parents for the religious training of their children.

Develop the religious habit in your children. Bring them to church. Where are your children this morning? What are they doing? Anything better than they would be doing here? Are they better occupied than they would be sitting here in the house of God Sunday morning, forming, unconsciously to themselves, a habit of church-going? Wouldn't that be better than for them to be, just as unconsciously, forming the habit of not going to church? They should expect to go to church just as regularly every Sunday morning as they do to go to school five mornings in the week.

You say, "Well, they can't understand the sermon". Well, your pastor isn't likely to preach to children when there are no children to preach to. You fill the empty pews with your little ones, and they will understand him. I could understand sermons that were preached to grown people long, long before I got over crying because I couldn't understand fractions. But my parents didn't tell me I needn't go to school because I couldn't understand the lessons. For that matter, I don't understand fractions yet. I am glad there is no examination in complex fractions and cube root at the gate of heaven. I'd never get in.

The value of this training in his own life was portrayed when in 1909 he was asked for an "Appreciation" for a little booklet, "In Remembrance", on the passing of Dr. Henry Griggs Weston, the beloved president for forty years of Crozier Theological Seminary.

Doctor Weston was my pastor when I was a boy eight years old. For seven years, in the First Baptist Church, of Peoria, Ill., my grandfather and my father were his deacons during that blessed pastorate. For more than half a century the judgments of the increasing years have blended with yesterday's memories; and the man's estimation is the boy's impres-

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sion, deepened and heightened, but never revised. I sat at his feet, then, looking up to him in loving reverence; my attitude never changed, though my hair turned gray as his grew white.

“For the love of Christ constraineth me” is the dearest of the texts I remember, and I recall so clearly the passages of truth and beauty in the sermon. I was a boy listening to a scholar. But as I listened I could understand. His sermons were for all his congregation. The old men leaned forward to hear every word. The children, with brightening eyes, looked up eagerly at the passages intended especially for them, and which were always kindly with the beautiful smile that made them tender as caresses. And his voice, strong, magnetic, gentle, persuasive—that alone would have kept him forever young to me.

So strong and yet tender was Mr. Burdette’s hold on the Sunday School, there was instituted after his resignation as Pastor, a Burdette service which is held on the Sunday nearest the date of his birthday, July 30th, and in which a specially prepared program, with an appropriate stage setting, is presented during the regular Sunday School hour. His last public appearance was on this occasion in 1914, when in conscious weakness he gave them as their Admiral his parting message, looking down into their hearts and faces with a love most tender, and, seemingly through them, out beyond, straining the fading sight to catch even then the first glimpses of Beulah Land.

This birthday service is continued to this day and his messages and spirit still abide with the young life of the church he loved so dearly.

That his last typewritten effort should have been a letter to Mr. T. T. Woodruff, Superintendent of the Sunday School, was as he would have wished it. The Superintendent, whom he always addressed as “Commodore”, had sent him a “Log Book” of the Sunday School exercises, to which he replied October 8, 1914,

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five weeks before he sailed out into the haven of eternal peace:

I have read the Log Book a dozen times, and my heart has O.K'd. it every time. For I have laid my heart on its dear pages as I recalled the sweet surprise of that day—the blessed ship in gala dress, the happy crew in "liberty clothes", the Admiral astonished out of speech, which was itself a marvellous thing, and the Commodore on the bridge—the best and blessedest Commodore that ever commanded the best and dearest Gospel Ship ever launched—I could see it all as plainly as though I had been there.

What a genius you are! What a ship you have made of it! What a clear, unmistakable call God sent you for the ministry he prepared for you! I am so glad for the "sea of glass before the throne, like unto crystal". I sometimes wonder if the dear Lord thought of you when he prepared that feature of the celestial landscape. The "river of life" is all right, of course, and would be all-sufficient for the most of us. But, dear me—you couldn't navigate a full rigged ship on a river!

How happy have been my years of service with you, afloat and ashore, my clumsy fingers cannot tell you. I think them over so many times in the night-times when I cannot sleep; I begin back in the early days when it was such a little ship, when you mustered the normal class at a time when it was hardly big enough for the smallest watch on the ship, up to these glad, proud, happy days when it can officer every detail on the ship. They have been happy years, haven't they?

Dear Boy—I do thank God for blessing these closing years of life and service with such a friend as you—so dear, so loyal, so true—I'll think of you when I get to Heaven.

Always lovingly your Pastor,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

If Mr. Burdette had a "specialty" as Pastor, it was in the conduct of the prayer-meetings, which he termed the "home-gatherings". He sensed that it could be made the opportunity for the "heart-to-heart" life" that mellows the ground for the sowing time. So happy

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was he in his methods of leading all kinds of people to overflow the prayer-meeting room—each feeling at liberty to bring to it his individual contribution of word or smile or prayer, song or testimony, and each taking away his own individual blessing—that denominational papers and pastors requested him to publish, in pamphlet form, “Prayer-meeting Topics, Suggestions and Methods”, to which he made reply:

I am the happy Pastor of a “prayer-meeting” Church. Temple Church was organized with a prayer-meeting, and from that day to this, the happiest, brightest, hopefulest, meetings of the Church have been the prayer-meetings. The attendance has frequently been limited only by the size of the room. More than thirty per cent of the membership roll, the working, praying, giving, “planning-and-doing” force of the Church is there, and “there” for some purpose.

The members sometimes tell the Pastor what they like to talk or pray or sing about at their meetings and so suggest the prayer-meeting topic. Consequently we do not make slavish use of any list of prepared topics for the year. No group of men, however wise and consecrated, can provide timely spiritual food for the daily needs of a church, two or three thousand miles and twelve months away. Temple Church, in common with many millions of American people, just now is just a little bit shy about using “canned goods”. We think the date of canning should be plainly printed on the labels.

We have always spoken of the prayer-meetings as the “Home Gatherings”. It is the home meeting of the church. It is the “upper room” where the disciples meet with the Master. No preaching is permitted in the prayer-meeting. On Sunday the Preacher has everything his own way; he preaches what he will and as he will, and the people have to listen without protest or interruption—but the prayer-meeting—that belongs to the Church. There the Pastor is just as lovingly welcome as any other member of the Church, but there the Preacher has no place. The oft-used expression, “Whatever is on your heart, brethren,” is literally responded to here. Sometimes it is an incident of the day in business or

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shop or home—sometimes it is a letter from an absent member, for this habit of writing to “the family” by those temporarily away has been much encouraged by the Pastor when absent on his own vacations—sometimes the singing of a solo that gives expression to the soul as only song can do.

Sometimes they talk of “Mother and her Hymns”, sometimes of “Father and his Bible chapters”, “Pastors I have loved”, “What if women kept silent in the Church”, “The Best Book in the Best Case”, “The Fourth Man in the Furnace”, as well as the more familiar topics. Not only is the spiritual life quickened, but as strangers invariably remark, there is a warmth and cordiality that makes them want to come again. And they come again and soon become “of us”.

This prayer-meeting habit is carried into the business meetings. Once in three months comes the regular quarterly business meeting of the church. The attendance is perhaps a little larger than at our regular prayer-meetings—men, women, and our “blessed young people” attending in the usual proportions. There is a hymn, a portion of scripture, a prayer, and then “the business of the King’s House”.

Through all the business runs a deep, clear current of spirituality. Occasionally someone will break out with an appropriate hymn at the close of a report. When the meeting is closed with prayer there is the feeling that we have had another good “prayer-meeting”. The church has been lifted up, strengthened, helped. And this is one great reason—it is “the” reason, why the records of our business meetings are illuminated with the repetition of “Carried unanimously”. The spirit of harmony born in the prayer-meeting makes it easy and natural for the people to “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” in business deliberations.

He sometimes called the prayer-meeting the engine-room of the church and an extract is given from one of his sermons not only elaborating this analogy, but because it illustrates his correctness in figures of speech and use of terms foreign to his real subject and his beauty of expression concerning common things and his picturesqueness of expression:

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On this pleasant Sabbath morning, chafing at the great cables, swinging slowly with the turning tide, rocking with the swells that roll in from the restless Atlantic, the greatest fleet that ever assembled under the Stars and Stripes is awaiting for a word from the President of the United States, which will come tomorrow; waiting for a signal that will break out from the masthead of the flagship in an eloquent flame of color, speaking the picturesque language of sailors.

Answering signals will flash out from every battleship, cruiser and torpedo boat. Cannon from casemate and barbette of the fort will thunder "Godspeed", and rapid-fire guns will answer "Good-by". Cheers from the multitudes on the shore; cheers from the sailors and bluejackets on the ships will voice the pride of a mighty nation. The fighting greyhounds of the sea will strain at their leashes, eager for the start on the long, long race through sun and calm, and night and storm. Well, the thundering guns, the shrill screaming of whistles, the cheers of the crowds, the fluttering signal flags won't start them.

Down out of sight of all the happy throngs and the gay bunting; away from the thrill and the excitement and the gala-day rainbow of color; down below the water line; down in the throbbing heart of each ship, "among the purring dynamos" where day and night are alike all the year round; down in each engine-room a man will open a great valve. And when he, out of sight and out of thought of the cheering multitude, has done this, the pent-up steam, screaming its impatience from every tiny vent, will fill the lungs of the ship. The power will be on, and then the ships will move.

Still deeper down are the bravest fighters on the ship—the stokers working before the hot, devouring mouths of the roaring furnaces, with never a shout to cheer and nothing to inspire them—only duty, white-robed and spotless as an angel of God, standing in the black grime of the stoke hole, and smiling gloriously into the faces of the men at their fiery posts.

The power of the ship of the church—it's not on the decks; it's down in the engine-room; it's behind the closed doors of the inner chamber; it's in the prayer-meeting room. And in Baptist churches the engine-room is down below the water line. What power and love and mystery of grace and might throb in the engine-room! It is pleasant and joyous here on Sunday.

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To me, there is religion and there is worship in the beauty of the room itself. I love the grace and the artistic science in the sweep of the galleries; in the loftiness of the dome, the lines of the room, the soft, pleasant color scheme that rests the eyes; the cathedral setting of the choir. My heart keeps time to the music of the organ, and throbs in sympathy, and feels the worshipful uplift of the great voice of praise when the congregation sings. I have never worshiped in a church that more tenderly awakened my religious nature. It is a beautiful place to come to on Sunday.

But all this is the deck of the ship. It's useful, nay, it's indispensable. It's a battleship—one of the biggest in the fleet. Away up there, see our fighting tops—with Leonard Merrill in command. Here are the conning towers, whence Mr. Fowler and his ushers look out over all the decks. Here sits the bandmaster and here is the band.

All over the ship, every man at his post, are the sailors—the fighters of the ship, true-blue every one of them—deep-water Baptists. The Bible is our compass; the pulpit is the figurehead, and the preacher is the admiral. It's all in the plan of the ship. And when it is decked out in Sunday trim it all looks beautiful and good.

And it is good, and it is useful; but this Sunday service, with all its grace and beauty of form and color and music, isn't what makes the ship go. Ah, my children, the engine-room is the prayer-meeting. It's at the family altar; it's in your daily Bible reading; it's in your daily prayers; it's in your communion with God. Stop the prayer-meeting for two weeks, and these great congregations would begin to fall off. Stop it for a month, and the church members would begin to quit coming to church.

“The gift of prayer” was one of Mr. Burdette’s richest blessings. He was able utterly to forget self, except for common human frailties and pleading necessities, and seemingly to ignore the public environment when taking to God the petition of the people. He prayed with such an exact understanding of all they would have him ask for and with such an

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intimate heart relation with the Loving Father that each one, hearing the prayer, felt sure it was made for them individually and would be answered to them.

He preferred always to offer prayer himself before his sermon. Thus he “whetted his own scythe”. His usual form was an ascription of praise, thanksgiving for blessings received and confession. Then supplications were offered with such great tenderness, reverence and earnestness that the congregation was unconsciously led into prayer for itself. As one pastor wrote of Mr. Burdette, in reference to a service in his pulpit:

Prayers were offered for the workingmen, the weary housewife—the merchant, the children who had great little burdens, the faithful nurse with her long vigil by the sick-bed of our loved ones—it was an appeal that the day might help all to come under the shadow of the Father’s care and love. The prayer was so helpful, uplifting and inspiring that it would need quite a dull sermon to bring the spirit down from the heights of devotion to which it had risen.

Many a person has told me they could go to church service and be satisfied if they listened only to the prayer. The simplicity, the directness, the perfect faith of the utterance carried comfort, assurance and power.

A brief petition, found on a scrap of paper in his desk, is here quoted:

Often as we would ask Thee for new blessing, our thankfulness for the mercies received crowd into our hearts and set aside the new petitions. For Thou dost remember our wants before we can speak them; Thou knowest our needs before we can tell them. Thou dost bring for us water in the wilderness and fruits in the desert, Thou givest honey out of the rock and rainest manna from the heavens. Thou art our Heavenly Father and we thank Thee for our daily food, which faileth not.

An offertory prayer often asked for, could be reproduced in his own handwriting:

God of all bounty—All things are Thine, and of Thine own

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free gifts to us, we have brought our offerings to the altar of Thy righteousness. Now bless Thou abundantly the offerings of the rich, who have given much. Bless yet more abundantly the offerings of the poor, who out of their poverty have given yet more. And oh, will Thou bless most lovingly and abundantly of all, the gifts of the very poor, who in their penury have brought Thee all they have—their love and their prayers, For Jesus sake.

Mr. Burdette may have been thought by church people as a “prayer-meeting specialist”, but he himself specialized in getting away from the stereotyped forms of the church that were only forms. He considered them “man-made” and therefore, he had as good a right to make his own as they had to make them for him. In the pulpit and out of the pulpit his saving sense of the dramatic, his delicate appreciation of what was reverent and what was really irreverent, enabled him to “hew close to the line” without shocking or losing the essence of reverence.

The responsive readings of each church service were never a formal chapter, but selected passages of scripture blended together on some special topic and leading, though the congregation did not often analyze why, to an understanding of the topic he would develop. With all his familiarity with the Bible and marvelous memory of location of chapter and verse, this often occupied as much time in preparation as the sermon, but it prepared the soil for the “Word” in a manner to which a less industrious or painstaking pastor would not have resorted.

While his imagination and nimbleness of mind especially expressed itself in the titles he gave his newspaper articles, lectures and talks, he never detracted from the beauty, dignity and reverence of a scripture text by startling headlines or topics of his

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sermons. He never made commonplace the "office of his high calling to preach the gospel."

AN OFFERTORY PRAYER

By Robert J. Burdette

God of all bounty—All things are thine, and of thine own free gifts to us, we have brought our offerings to the altar of thy righteousness. Thou bless thou abundantly the offerings of the rich, who have given much. Bless yet more abundantly the offerings of the poor, who out of their poverty have given yet more. And oh, wilt thou bless most lovingly and abundantly of all, the gifts of the very poor, who in their penury have brought thee all they have—their love and their prayers for Jesus' sake.

Temple Baptist Church, Los Angeles, Calif.

Pacific Baptist June 18, 1908

FACSIMILE OF OFFERTORY PRAYER BY ROBERT J. BURDETTE, PUBLISHED IN THE PACIFIC BAPTIST, JUNE 18, 1908.

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And the same ethical psychology explained his natural humor in a sermon, according to his reply to London interviewers who propounded the usual question, "Do you consider humor out of place in the pulpit?"

You might as well say the pulpit is not the place for pathos. Anyway, I would rather make ten men laugh than one man cry. We are not told whether there will be any laughter in Heaven, but we are told there will be no crying there.

No administration that he performed for the church was more impressive than the ordinance of baptism, though he used a form that was particularly his own. On one occasion the pastor baptized twenty-three candidates, ranging in age from nine years to eighty-three, so filling him with a spiritual sense of gratitude for this crowning of his efforts that he seemed for the moment to be "walking apart from this world". As this company of friends, brothers and sisters, husband and wife, father and grandfather stepped down into the waters of the baptistry, each bearing a spray of Easter lilies, and came up out of the waters still bearing this symbol of purity, the Pastor, with radiant face, lifted his hands in prayer and said, "Lord, we have done as Thou hast directed and yet there is room". So reverentially impressive was this in all its details, many were the eyes wet with tears.

Mr. Burdette introduced a service entirely unique in the history of the Baptist denomination, which in a sense corresponded to the "christenings" of other churches. This was known as "The Name Service" and grew out of his deep-seated belief that children should not be left to the evils of life until parents or child came to the mature judgment that having sinned it was time to repent. He felt that a far greater thing

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was to keep them from the sin of the world by knowing “no other way” than righteousness and beautiful living.

The form used at the christening of his own little granddaughter was and is used with variations for other children:

Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord.

As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of the youth.

And Hannah brought her son unto the house of Jehovah in Shiloh; and the child was young. And she said, “For this child I prayed; and Jehovah hath given me my petition which I asked of Him; therefore also I have granted him to Jehovah; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord.”

And when the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, they brought the child Jesus up to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord, and to offer the sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons.

And Jehovah said, “I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy children after thee in all their generations, for an everlasting covenant to be a God unto thee and unto thy children”.

Then there were brought unto Jesus little children that he should lay his hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was moved with indignation, and said unto them, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.”

And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.

The minister: “Do you, father and mother, accept for yourselves and for this little one, the covenant of God, desiring earnestly that its blessings may rest upon your little child? And in this prayer do you lovingly and willingly consecrate your little one to God the Father?”

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The parents: "We do."

To the god-father: "Do you, called to be god-father to the little one, promise to be to her a true friend, a faithful counsellor and a loving protector, through all her years of childhood and youth?"

The god-father: "I do."

To the parents: "What name have you given this child?"

The parents: "Clara Bradley."

Our dear Heavenly Father, and Thou, Oh Jesus of Bethlehem, lover and saviour of little children, into Thy keeping of love and truth and wisdom we commend this dear and blessed little one. We lay her in Thy arms for Thy blessing and favor, for the blessing which Thou didst whisper above the little ones in Jerusalem. Lead her in all the increasing years, in paths of righteous, in safe and pleasant ways of peace. Keep the precious soul from sin and evil of the world. With coming years of knowledge and discretion, bring her into the fellowship of the church of God, confessing Christ and following Him in the waters of the baptism of regeneration. Be Thou her Heavenly Father, O Lord our God, be Thou her loving Elder Brother, O Jesus our Saviour, and bring her at last with everlasting joy into the glory of her eternal home.

Many expressions in the usual marriage ceremony did not appeal to him. He created a form of ceremony that all brides "just loved" and assembled friends approved and admired, in which he gave play to his purest imagination and tenderest expressions. He omitted from the usual ceremony the expression "in sickness and in health", saying to "love her, comfort her, honor and keep her" covered the conditions without cumbering the promise. He never asked the bride to promise to "obey him and serve him", that being obsolete. Nor did he require the man to say "with all my worldly goods I thee endow", because he felt that did not matter if he endowed her with the higher and finer things of his manly life that would follow. "As

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Isaac and Rebekah lived faithfully together", he also omitted, as he interpreted the biblical history, to record the fact that "she was not a faithful wife, but a lying, nagging woman". The ceremony used at the marriage of his own step-son is treasured by more than the immediate interested parties and shows with what wealth of expression he adorned this sacred sacrament.

The long years on the lecture platform and the large contact with the newspaper public had tethered to Mr. Burdette, by cords that time and place left unbroken, large groups of people, not only from every State in the Union, but wherever English-speaking people lived throughout the world. This drew a very cosmopolitan congregation and church membership. His remarkable memory and surprising versatility were the marvel of all those who heard him, as he passed down a long line of new members extending the right hand of fellowship with a personal word of welcome to each, adapted only to that individual.

Among his papers is a sheet on which he had written:

Right Hand of Fellowship.
Welcome to Service.
Comfort. (One who has sorrowed.)
Joy of Conflict. (One with peculiar temptations.)
Messenger, swift-footed. (Young man.)
Service of singing. (Woman member of Choir.)
Head of the House; its Priest indeed. (Father.)
Joy.
A Three-fold cord. (One of a family of three.)
Service of Counsel. (Professional man.)
Welcome to the green pastures of refreshing grace.
(A sweet-faced old lady.)
Rest that follows toil. (Old Man.)
The strength and glory of the Promises.

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and twenty-four others which were evidently outlined for a morning when thirty-five new members were taken into the church.

This cosmopolitan congregation was also due to two other facts which Mr. Burdette inspired, that of the down-town church and his catholicity of invitation. When Temple Church was first organized he issued the following invitation in card form and had it widely distributed:

THE TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Who are Invited?

Who are Wanted?

—all of the following:

RAILROAD MEN. Presidents, superintendents, managers, clerks, engineers, conductors, motormen, car cleaners, repairers, electricians; and the men that use the shovel and the pick.

NEWSPAPER MEN. Publishers, editors, managers, solicitors, compositors, pressmen, stereotypers, mailers, bookkeepers, office boys and newsboys.

MERCHANTS. Proprietors, clerks, bookkeepers, stenographers, salesmen, saleswomen, cash and bundle boys.

CAPITALISTS. The banker, real estate men, all mining men.

THE JUDGE, attorneys and clerks.

THE ARCHITECT. Contractors, carpenters, brick masons, apprentices, painters, plumbers, gas fitters.

THE RESTAURANTERS, the waiter, the chef, the bell boy, the porter, the housekeeper, the matron, messenger, the hair dresser, bootblacks, bakers, the laundress, the hostler, the upholsterer.

SALOON PROPRIETORS are most cordially invited. Please come and bring your customers.

STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS. Young and old, rich and poor, one and all.

“The rich and the poor meet together,
and the Lord is the Maker of them all.”

—Prov. 22:2.

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To the Stranger and the Visitor, and especially to the men and women of that world-wide confraternity that amuses, and teaches, and encourages from stage and rostrum, whose restless year knows three hundred stopping places and no home—"A Hundred Thousand Welcomes!" Make the Temple your Church Home while you sojourn in Los Angeles.

This was signed by the replica of his own signature, thus giving it a more personal touch. It was the art of this personal appeal in everything he did which was part of his power.

In no way did he give greater emphasis to this personal touch than in the preparation of the *Temple-Herald*, the weekly calendar that awaited the great congregation each Sabbath and which imparted one of the most important and helpful silent services to those who read with their soul as well as their eyes. He knew so well the appeal of the artistic and dramatic touch, as well as the detailed recognition of personal groups outside of the church.

The calendar for one Decoration Day carried two items of information:

The sword upon the pulpit was carried at the battle of Bunker Hill one hundred and thirty years ago. It is a genuine Toledo blade.

The members of the City police force who are with us today are representatives of the armies of the Union, the Confederacy, the Spanish-American war, and of the war in the Philippines.

He gave as much time and thought to the preparation of the *Herald* as to the writing of the sermons and the acknowledgment of its value was found in the fact that it had regular paid subscriptions from people in the east, this fund going to the work of the church. His habit was to choose a text and a sermon topic; then to carefully select a cut for the front page which

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should illustrate the topic of the sermon, and then write a poem to give expression to the cut.

This last was undertaken in response to my suggestion. He asked me once what I wanted for Christmas and I replied "a poem each week for the calendar", knowing through the years how much of helpfulness, tenderness and poetic expression could flow from his pen when affection and sentiment moved upon his spirit. These poems were afterward gathered into a book entitled, "Silver Trumpets".

His dedication of the little volume indicates the spirit of the lines that follow:

And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee two trumpets of silver; of beaten work shalt thou make them; and thou shalt use them for the calling of the congregation, and for the journeying of the camps. And when they shall blow them, all the congregation shall gather themselves unto thee at the door of the tent of the meeting.

The echoes of the Silver Trumpets are very dear to the Pastor who sounded the calls in the years from 1903 to 1909, for they are the voices of the worshippers who sang the songs of Zion in the Tent of the Meeting, and chanted the marching music of the Church along the way of Pilgrimage. And he hopes they may once more sound pleasantly to the past and the present mighty Congregations of the Temple, which on the recurring Sabbath days still throng the House beyond its doors, even while their uncounted numbers are scattered in long skirmish lines and serried columns from the Sunrise to the Sunset.

He likewise carefully selected the pictures in his study and changed them from time to time, that they might preach a sermon to all who entered there.

And a later article, "The Pew as Seen from the Pulpit", is a rich commentary on the manners of a congregation, "played up" in his choicest style.

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Speaking of mannerisms, Mr. Burdette was heard repeatedly to say:

I have never understood why the dear Lord thought I ought to make my way through life, making a living and doing my work, standing before the public, talking, when I hadn't the first qualification for it. I am just a little bent-legged fellow with no voice or presence, little hair and few teeth.

He failed to acknowledge that personality is supreme, that the merry heart of him drew all men, that his understanding of the human heart in all its joys and sorrows was the key that unlocked the heart of the world to him, that his never-failing faith in mankind and God gave him more than mere human power. And men loved him. Women loved him, too, for women are given to a genuine affection for their pastor, as well as a sentimental adoration of the "dear pastor". But he was a man's man and they expressed an affection for him that was unusual as between men. Men liked his simple, straightforward preaching, for he always felt that it was not a theological thesis, nor a literary production they wanted, but the simple story of the gospel, and as best evidence of the truth of this was a count made of rows of the congregation taken Sunday after Sunday, morning and evening, and 51 per cent plus of men in attendance.

An editor in an Eastern paper commenting upon Mr. Burdette's pastorate and the frequent question, "Why do not more men go to church?" said:

In an overwhelming percentage of cases the environment of an education for the ministry unfits a man for the calling for which he believes himself to be preparing. It is different with the Rev. Burdette. He spent more than twenty years in the roil and ruction of newspaper offices, learning to know humanity

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not as it ought to be, or as it would like to be, or as the churchmen would like to believe it, but as it is. Better yet, most of that period was lived in the lesser towns, where the editor suffers even less from the aloofness that is the bane of the priesthood than does his contemporary in a large city.

He spent other years on the road, lecturing and meeting and mingling with all sorts and conditions of man and woman-kind. He knows us; he can talk to us; he can understand us and we can understand him. He speaks the language of our tribe, and neither his mental processes nor his spiritual emotions are too rarefied to appeal to us. The wit and wisdom, the ready sympathy and fine humanity that delighted and improved us in his humorous writing and in his lay addresses can not fail to shine through his pulpit efforts. It ought to be worth while to sit under his preaching. Even to read his sermons would be a privilege.

It is a tribute to Mr. Burdette's breadth of spirit that as a preacher, thinker, brother of men, he treasured the memory of a friendship begun with Robert J. Ingersoll during his boyhood. Both were of the type of master-mind, though the one was mature when the other was beginning his career. When Mr. Ingersoll died, Mr. Burdette, then pastor of the Pasadena Presbyterian Church, had no hesitancy in paying a tribute to Mr. Ingersoll from that pulpit:

When, but a short day or two ago Robert G. Ingersoll passed beyond the confines of this life into the world that sets this one right, there stepped from the stage of earthly activities the most brilliantly eloquent orator of his nation. God give him peace. . . .

I was a boy of fourteen when first I knew this brilliant man, as a schoolboy might know a young lawyer, eleven years his senior. As I grew to manhood, our lives came closer together; I was a writer on a newspaper, he a powerful and prominent politician of the same party. Those of us who knew him best remember him now most tenderly, with all gentleness in our

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sorrow. The head of gold, the heart of silver—alas, the feet of human clay—we knew so well.

We knew the generous heart, the open hand, the loving nature. When my early ambitions began to ripen into purposes, I talked with him about them. How manly, how honest, how helpful were his suggestions and counsel, so gladly and freely given—a client waiting in the ante-room while this great lawyer advised and encouraged an ambitious boy on the threshold of journalism.

They clung to him lovingly, the Christian people of Peoria who were his friends. In more than one Christian family have I heard the prayers at the family altar go up to the throne of grace for him, that he might give to God the noblest uses of the splendid powers God had given him. The man's life in his old home was circled by prayers.

The great sorrow of it all is that he should have preached unbelief, distrust; that he should have torn down a sweet hope, a beautiful faith, when he had nothing to give in its place. That he should have taught doubt. Here and there, perhaps, he shook some strong faith in a stalwart Christian; here and again, it may be, he quenched, or seemed to utterly quench, the light of faith in some "little one" of Christ's whose wavering faith was already weak. God pity us all! Is your life, is mine, always a gospel of faith and trust and joyous hope? Have we never by word or act, by faulty life, by inconsistent walk awakened in some questioning soul new and multiplied doubts?

He has gone beyond the reach of our judgment, beyond the weight of our censure, the sweetness of our praise. He stands where, soon or late, in a few days or in many years, you and I must stand. And where we must stand to be judged, just as he is judged—at the bar of God, not the tribunal of men. Some good there was he did; some evil. When we stand where he now stands, when the All-seeing eye looks upon the naked soul, yours and mine, will God see no stain of evil in our lives? "If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"

His tolerance was voiced in a poem he wrote concerning the various mental attitudes people took toward prayer, the last stanza reading:

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Father give each his answer,
Each in his kindred way:
Adapt Thy light to his form of night
And grant him his needed day.

His summing up of the worth-whileness of preaching the gospel was set down in his reply to a preacher friend who had been somewhat discouraged and who asked his advice about returning to literature:

Don't you be in a hurry to abandon the greatest, highest, noblest calling on earth for anything else. "Literature" is dust under the feet of the gospel.

CHAPTER XI

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THIS permanent church work, while it would have required all the energies of a less resourceful and physically strong man, did not by any means absorb all his energies, for his fame as a public speaker, and his ready response, was to make constant and innumerable demands upon him for his part in civic life.

Possibly it was well that he had this call from the more current events to spare him what was a great strain upon him in the purely church line of service, because of his keen sympathy. He was so well known by strangers in the community, he was so loved by those who had felt his sympathy that there was a large disproportionate demand upon him for the services of the dead, and while he rendered them freely and lovingly, they drew greatly upon him, and I often felt that had it not been for the reaction that he found in this very civic life, the seriousness of the other service would have robbed him earlier of his humor and in some sense of his buoyant spirit.

To undertake to enumerate and classify the demands made upon him would be an impossible task, but they were so varied that they became interesting, interesting because of the various types of people who felt they had equal claim upon him.

His was a justifiable pride in that his popularity as a lecturer withstood distance, the years, and changing attitude of the public mind toward this form of entertainment. The Redpath Lyceum Bureau, under date

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of April 25, 1907, over thirty years after the date of Mr. Burdette's first lecture, wrote:

The matter which is agitating my mind at present is whether or not you would care to accept lecture engagements. If you could see your way clear to accept an engagement of six to ten weeks, with six lectures per week, I would most certainly be delighted to entertain a proposition from you on this basis. I can further testify and solemnly promise to pledge and otherwise assure you that the jump will not be over an average of one hundred to one hundred and fifty miles per day and that there will be no necessity of cross-country drives in a blizzard with the mercury twenty degrees below zero, as in the olden days.

As these lectures paid \$100 each, the six weeks engagement meant \$3600 and the ten weeks' engagement, \$6000, a very good earning capacity for one passing the sixty-third birthday.

Of course he could only accept such lecture engagements as would permit him to return to his Sunday service and not interrupt church work, but he was in constant demand for banquets, being a famous toastmaster, for addresses of every kind and description, including educational, political, municipal, social and, of course, all phases of church work.

In the course of his long lecture career he received every form of introduction, from the sublime to the ridiculous, and many were the smiles he had over the unconscious humor of the men who tried to introduce the humorist in a humorous way, but one of the most beautiful and treasured introductions he ever received was that given in these later years by President James A. B. Scherer of Throop College of Technology, on the occasion of his lecture in Pasadena on "Rainbow Chasers", when Dr. Scherer said:

God gave him wit. Shining, and clean and keen, his shafts shoot swift at shams, follies and falsehoods. For these he

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keeps his quiver full of sharp and stinging arrows; his shining wit.

God gave him humor. His Jovian mirth compels the fat round earth to cosmic glee—seismic shocks that shake the terra firma from Watts to Burmah, in the camaraderie of blithe hilarity.

God gave him fancy; his hawkeye pierces through the husk to seed, through fact to truth; his eye can read beauty in commonplace places, and his pen becomes a brush.

God gave him grace; those smiling lips are touched with holy fire; he knows to teach the lowly to aspire; his words have spelt to multitudes release and peace.

God gave him heart—warm as the April sunshine, friendly as rain, mellow as winter apples, open, and plain.

God gives him to us. We can not repay the debt that we owe kindly Heaven for our own Bob Burdette.

He not only preached the Baccalaureate sermons in the universities of the Coast, but gave the commencement addresses at high schools and the various educational institutions of the State.

His cleverness as an after-dinner speaker and as a toastmaster at formal and informal banquets was known far and wide, and few were the functions of a public character in Southern California that he was not called upon to lend his share of cheer and good humor, and in his addresses always there blended that bright humor with the splendid philosophy of his living. He was toastmaster on the occasion of the entertainment of Sir Thomas Lipton at Pasadena, and it was at that time that he poked a bit of fun at his neighboring city of Los Angeles that has become classic in the West:

What is the use of Los Angeles annexing territory to make it a seaport? All Los Angeles has to do is to run a pipe line down to the ocean, and then if she will only suck as hard as she blows now, she will have the whole ocean at her doorstep.

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Continuing, he said:

We do our guest honor in the most typical Pasadena fashion. We welcome him to a banquet party at which tea is the only tipple, where the toastmaster is a Baptist minister, and one of the after-dinner speakers is a Lutheran missionary, the next a clergyman of the Church of England, and the third a Scotch Presbyterian minister. If that blend of theology doesn't satisfy an Irishman, who is a British merchant, born in "Glesgie" and trained in America, we can add a dozen other ecclesiastical flavors to it without weakening the brew.

The versatility and adaptability of his mind was never better shown than in the introduction of the speakers at this banquet:

I will fire the gun—a harmless old, smooth-bore howitzer, that was used all through the Civil War, to start the regatta. Speaking of the war—but that brings us into peril on a lee shore. We must hasten to tack ship and get out into blue water. We are at the starting line and the starting gun is fired. It's up to you, Dr. Scherer.

Dr. Scherer began his talk by stating he had some days ago received a program of the Pennsylvania Society dinner given to Mr. Burdette this same evening, and Mr. Burdette had been its guest in Los Angeles and driven to Pasadena to act as toastmaster at this banquet. Dr. Scherer went on to say:

this program was written all over in red ink by the hand of this festive toastmaster, and it read: "They may kill me yet. If they do, bury me on old Orange Grove Avenue. It will be sure to be torn up on or before the resurrection day."

In introducing Dr. Learned to the Lipton banquetters, Mr. Burdette said:

I have not received much education in yachting, but as a boy I can remember sailing over into a neighbor's orchard and back again, with spanker flying. That was in old Nantucket, that was, as you know, a great whaling point in those days.

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And now we are to hear from a rector of the Church of England. Hard-a-lee Doctor.

At the close he delivered the "dog watch" in nautical terms, with great applause.

None who had any claim from a civic or philanthropic point of view to his talents as a public speaker and to the wealth of his philosophy and affection, ever sought him in vain. To the nurses graduating from training at the Pasadena Hospital he gave some advice born out of his long experiences, when he said:

It is only a child of a world, a mere baby among the planets. You will humor it a little and be patient with it. Like all children, it is more or less conceited. You will find that after the first time it pretends to have brain fag merely to enjoy the luxury of a trained nurse, and like all children, it loves a real headache and thinks it is going to die in ten minutes.

You will know when to soothe and comfort it with motherly cooings and you will know when to administer the other treatment. For sometimes the very best and kindest thing you can do is at some opportune moment, when none of the family is around, to lift it out of its warm, comfortable bed and its nest of downy pillows, and set it down into the hardest bottomed chair in the room with a slam that rattles the medicine glasses on the little stand. Astonishment associates most advantageously with firmness as an effective remedial agent in a large class of disorders which exist only in the whim of the patient.

I have been a trained nurse myself for many years. My observation has been that in cases of the character above indicated, after a patient has been treated with coddle he is subject to frequent relapses, coming back again and again for more, until he can take thirty doses a day, and then groan himself sweetly and comfortably to sleep, whereas after one heroic dose of slam, the same patient gets up, puts on his every-day clothes and goes back to work.

He welcomed the 66th Annual Convention of the American Institute of Homeopathy, in Pasadena, by saying:

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A hundred thousand allopathic welcomes! Each welcome in heroic doses—the minutest trituration bigger than an old-fashioned bolus. To be taken in the same old way—eyes shut and mouth open—swallowing whatever we set before you, believing whatever we tell you and asking no questions for your conscience's sake. Most appropriately are you welcomed, for this month also marks my own personal sixty-sixth annual convention. I was born the year after Samuel Christian Frederich Hahnemann died. How the world got along during that interim year has always been a mystery to me. I was born in homeopathic quantity, and in my old age I have not departed therefrom. Welcome, then, from a contemporary of your own school.

Of three things is sickless and sinless Pasadena proud—the Board of Trade, the churches and Pasadena Hospital; every one of them over-crowded, and each one naturally busier than the other two. There aren't enough physicians in the city to look at half the tongues that are thrust out daily, and so the postmaster works overtime at the stamp window.

You are as welcome to our festivities as you are to the rooms haunted with pain, where imploring eyes, with the mute eloquence of need, look into your faces as the lepers used to look up into the face of the Healing Christ. Welcome to bowers of roses and to the banquet board, and to all the fraternity of our good fellowship. We will crown you with wreaths of camomile and garlands of belladonna. We will decorate the gates of the city and the windows of our drug stores with banners of calamus—sweet flag of our country!

But such an allopathic speech is out of place and practice at a homeopathic banquet. As I took my text from Shakespeare, I close with the words of the bard in the "Merchant of Venice":

"Sirs, you are welcome to our house; It must appear in other ways than words; therefore I scant this breathing welcome."

Three dollars, please. And ten cents for the phial. No charge for the cork.

At the time of the reception to the Fleet in 1908, he was in constant demand as the one man who could express the spirit of the Coast. It was on at least six

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nearly consecutive occasions that he addressed different gatherings and functions in honor of the officers of the Fleet, and at San Francisco on May 7th, he spoke on "Battles and Banquets", and said:

A little while ago, in the land of Everything, I sat at a banquet with the Atlantic Fleet for six glorious days, as many joyous nights, and an equal number of thoughtful mornings. There have been banquets, some of you may remember, that have lasted longer than that, tasting different each successive morning. I sat enthroned between the Quaker uniforms of the Admirals, and the sad, nun-like garbs of the Governor's staff, representing the entire gold reserve of the Treasury, listening impatiently to the eloquent after-dinner speeches consuming valuable time which should have been utilized by mine own.

And as I heard the landsmen, who got so seasick on the launches they couldn't visit the fleet, extol the splendor and the invincible armament of our peerless navy, I thought what a cat-and-parrot time the Japanese fleet would have trying to sail up the Los Angeles River. I laughed to think what a bitter awakening would come to the misguided nation that should surround the United States and try to starve us out. An' "durin' the wah", wherein, with a most unnatural and bloodthirsty ferocity entirely foreign to my native disposition, I killed as many of the Confeds as they killed of me, we used to say of our favorite general, that "he'd rather fight than eat". Gentlemen of the Blue and Gold, I have fought for my country and I have eaten for her. And I declare that our fighting General was right. He was a soldier, and he instinctively chose the easier job. I wasn't so tired at the close of the siege of Vicksburg, or the long foot-race down the Red River, as I was when the festivities ended at Los Angeles. . . .

Battles and banquets are yoke fellows in the history of the world. Esau sat down to dinner with his clever brother, and the result of that savory banquet was enmity and hatred between the house of the twin brethren for nearly 4000 years, for they hate each other unto this day. They were good friends—as good friends as twin brothers usually are—until they met at dinner and talked business.

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The great war of American Independence raged around a cup of tea. Our fathers loved tea. But they died rather than drink it. If it was English breakfast tea, I don't blame them.

The French revolution simply formed the long bread lines of the Paris mobs into a line of battle. If you want to set a group of friendly dogs to fighting, just throw down one bone among them.

Abraham Lincoln was walking down a street in Springfield one morning, with two of his boys beside him, bawling lustily. A neighbor heard the row and looked out. "What's the matter with the boys, Mr. Lincoln?" "Oh," he replied, "just what ails all the rest of the world. I have three walnuts and each of them wants two."

To the graduates of Throop Polytechnic Institution he gave of his best experience when he said:

You hear the question discussed in religious magazines and the pulpits all over the country, "Why have the working men left the church?" I will tell you. Because we have so few working men in the pulpit. Here a boy is sent to kindergarten when he is 4 years old, enters the primary department at 6, graduates from high school at 18 or 19, gets his diploma from college at 22, closes a post-graduate course at Harvard at 23. A year in Europe. Then he specializes for a year, and at 25, having spent 21 years of his life in the school, studying, and in the class room among students, professors, investigators and theorists, he steps out upon the rostrum or climbs into the pulpit.

"Now, I will teach men. Now I will get at the hearts of men who have moistened their brows with the sweat of toil since they were 15 years old, who began their apprenticeship to life when they were 6 years old. Who have earned their own living ever since they could sell newspapers, polish shoes and run on errands."

Then he preaches and lectures to people brought up somewhat like himself and wonders why the working men have drifted away from the church.

I tell you, learned professor, these things that have made you the great teacher, the wise man, the learned scholar that

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you are, do not open a way into the hearts of men. I tell you, Jesus Christ could not so have drawn to himself the hearts of the common people who heard him gladly, the thronging multitudes that followed him gladly out into the wilderness; the poor and the wretched, the homeless and the penniless had not clustered about him, blind men had not called to him, mothers had not brought their little ones to him, lepers in defiance of the law had not burst through the multitudes to cast themselves at his feet, had he not been the son of a carpenter, even as he was the son of God.

He was always an ardent suffragist, believing in the absolute social and political equality of the sexes, and his voice and pen were busy in any campaign for women's suffrage or its extension. Typical of his suffrage addresses is one delivered in Temple Baptist Church on the subject of "Fair Play for Fair Women", and the text from Philippians, "Help these women". He was eloquent with his faith in the equality of woman to take her place beside man in any field of righteousness or endeavor, and in a later speech delivered in the heat of a suffrage campaign, he said:

Why shouldn't woman vote? Everybody else in America votes. Americans, English, French, Germans, Dutch, Italians, Russians, Austrians, Canadians, Mexicans, negroes, Indians, half-breeds, rich men, poor men, beggar men, tramps and thieves, burglars and safe-blowers, confidence men, hold-ups and strong arms, men who can't read, men who can't write, men who can't speak a word of English, drunkards and degenerates, swindlers and pickpockets, frauds and counterfeiter, pig-headed men, skillet-headed men, men with one idea, men with half an idea, men who never had a ghost of an idea in all their lives, and never had any place to put it if they had picked one up in the street, men who have been in jail, men on their way to the penitentiary, politicians, ward heelers, grafters and ballot-box stuffers, bribe-givers and bribe-takers, all the men in Adams County, O., men who run dance houses and men who run gambling houses, men who run blind pigs and road-houses, liars,

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fools, knaves, all sorts and conditions of rascality—the one qualification in every instance being that they must be males—these have each an equal voice in the selection of our officers, the law-makers of the great republic from President down to Councilman.

Now, what's the matter with extending the franchise to the woman? Isn't she good enough? You entrust a share in the direction of the government of the country to all the scourings of rascaldom enumerated above. These are your fellow citizens. You walk to the polls with them. Some of them—a great many of them, belong to your party and help to elect your candidate.

Your wife—sweet, and pure, and refined, and a little more highly educated than yourself, it may be—can't she be trusted to select the best candidate and cast a vote for him? Do you demand in the voter a moral qualification so high that she cannot attain thereto? Isn't your wife, your sister, your sweetheart, your mother, good enough to assist in the direction of the affairs of this republic—this State of California—this city of Los Angeles?

These fellows whom I have described in types and occupations think she is too good. That's why they are going to vote against woman suffrage. Every man who is afraid of the entrance into our political life of a mighty influence for righteousness will vote against the eighth amendment, even though he has to take a man into the booth to mark his ballot for him.

Doesn't she know enough? Hasn't she good sense, your wife? Doesn't she know as much as the flat-head from the slums of some European capital who was naturalized in a wholesale bunch before he had been in New York long enough to get on the police force? Doesn't she know as much as any dumb-head in the mobs of voting cattle who are often herded to the polls in the great cities, casting their ballots without knowing for whom they are voting? Doesn't she know enough to vote the ballot the man hands her?

She knows more than that. She knows enough to mark her own ballot. She knows too much. That's the reason the men who deal in "voting cattle" are opposed to the eighth

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amendment. The professional politicians are her avowed enemies.

Isn't she clever enough? Does she lack political intelligence? She has had little enough experience in politics in this State. It is difficult to learn politics without practice. But listen to this: A few weeks ago all the political camps in the State were thrown into a panic by the fear that all the amendments would fail, being either badly drawn, faultily recorded, incorrectly phrased, some fault of ignorance or incapacity on the part of the statesmen and secretaries threatened the validity of every one of them.

With one lone exception.

Let me read you a paragraph from the editorial columns of the Los Angeles *Times*—a journal not favorable to the cause of woman suffrage, but which is fair to say, editorially, August 21, that “amidst the tangled condition of the amendments which cost the State of California thousands of dollars to have presented in their muddled shape, that one lone amendment stood out, clear, comprehensive, exact in text and record, and that is the amendment providing for woman suffrage.”

Curtsy to the *Times*, ladies, your prettiest and gracefulest. Toss the General a rose. In the heart of him, he knows that legislation would be improved in form, spirit, enactment, text, transcript and record, if there were a few women to look after it.

While his was the type of mind that had little comprehension of commercialism as practiced especially by banking institutions, it is perhaps a remarkable illustration of his diversified adaptability that when the National Bankers Association met in Los Angeles in 1910 he was asked to make them an address, which he did on “Thrift,” so acceptably it was not only printed in full in their annual record, but has been repeatedly reprinted for the purpose of suggestion and entertainment:

What is thrift? I went to that great safety deposit of all human knowledge, the Century Dictionary, for information,

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and the dictionary said that thrift is the condition of one who thrives. Well, that sounded reasonable, but it was not quite good enough, so I read on further. It said: "Luck, fortune, success." And then it paused there, for the audience didn't look satisfied, and it said once more—it said: "Frugality, economical management." And still the judges looked a little bit dissatisfied, and the Century Dictionary made one final and a good shot at it. It said: "Good husbandry." Well, that is about it. The best definition I know of is just about "thrift".

It is like the boy's dogs. He had four or five, and one day he showed them to a friend who came to see them. This was a fox hound; this was a bull dog; this was a terrier; this was another. And finally they came to the last one, who had the best qualities, the keenest scent, was the best fighter and the one that was able to take care of itself under all circumstances, and the boy said: "This is just dog."

Now, after all, what is thrift? Just thrift. It is an old English word, and, like most old words, has rustic associations. The word brings to one's mental vision a clean farm, not over-acred, but without a weed or a mortgage on it; a farmer who has men to do his work and a farmer's wife with servants in the house and leisure afternoons for herself, in spite of all which the man does more work than any two of his hired men and the woman does a little more than half the housework.

He takes the paper and reads it without spelling the words of two syllables aloud; is a church member; a school trustee; owns a little mysterious dividend-paying stock, which the neighbors always mention in the plural; loans a little money on cut-throat security and compounds all the overdue interest; is kind-hearted and cheery spoken; forecloses a mortgage with a smile and an encouraging prophecy of better times just ahead for the mortgagor. Pays every obligation on the minute and to the penny, takes advantage of every holiday and Sunday, and always waits for the change. Waits till he gets it, too. But if the odd penny in the transaction is coming your way he hesitates and gazes at you with a pathetic note of inquiry in his expectant eyes. If, with half an eye on that penny yourself, you mumble ever so indistinctly, "Oh, that's all right!" he

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fades out of the scenario so swiftly and completely that you think you must have dreamed you saw him standing there a minute ago.

Never wronged any man out of a dollar and no man ever did him out of a nickel; carries his money in an old-fashioned wallet, with more and tighter folds than a boa-constrictor, with which he wraps up his wad very rapidly when he has received a payment, and unwraps it with the deliberate motions of a man working by the day when he is getting out money to pay over to you. When his wife wants a dollar for shoes for herself and the five children it takes him longer to unroll that wallet than it did to unveil the Washington monument. When he dies, which he does very reluctantly, he leaves his family well provided for. Well, that's thrift.

The family then proceed to cut the thong off that wallet close up to the leather and rip it up the back, preparatory to giving a practical demonstration of spendthrift.

There is a vaudeville song which had great vogue a few years ago which embodies a most excellent philosophy of thrift. Being a minister I had to learn it from my sons, but they say I sing it very well for a preacher. The refrain line runs like this: "Every little bit added to what you've got makes just a little bit more."

That is the philosophy of worldly prudence and thrift, and it is excellent, so far as it goes. The savings bank is the best school of the best thrift.

A little tin savings bank on the mantel for the baby; a little iron one on his table in the boy's room; a big vault of chilled steel for father; a little corner in the bureau drawer where everybody else can get at it, for mother. All good training in saving. Lay by a little bit of it as it comes in.

A little bit out of every pay envelope, enough to patch the leak in the roof, enough to provide for the "rainy day", enough for the little holiday once in a while, enough for a new book and an evening at "the show", enough for the dreary days of sickness.

Enough to pay every bill when it is presented. Enough to take up the note when it is due. Enough to save a man from becoming the unmitigated nuisance that is always borrowing

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quarters and halves, knowing they are obligations too small to justify a dun.

Enough to save the humiliation of walking home because you haven't the carfare. Enough to enable you to fearlessly meet the eye of the deacon as he comes down the church aisle with the basket.

Enough to make you sure of finding the dime in the corner of your pocket when you dive after it.

Just enough in the bank so that when your wife needs a little extra money for little emergency demands in the household she won't come to you with the air of a woman who has made up her mind to suicide or murder, and doesn't care very much which.

That's thrift. That makes a man rich on a salary, and no man ever yet got rich on a salary. But he can acquire the habit of thrift on the smallest salary, and that is much the same thing as wealth.

Just a little bit more. Just enough to send the children to school; enough to teach the boy a good trade or start him in the way of good business; enough to marry the girls well and happily; enough to keep an extra loaf in the larder and a cup and a crust on the table for a friend who comes out of his journey; enough for the waning strength and shortening hours of old age; enough to maintain the little sinking fund to meet the last expenses on earth.

"Every little bit added to what you've got makes just a little bit more." That's all good. It's excellent. It's sound policy. It's practical wisdom. It's thrift. We ought to learn it ourselves and teach it to our children. It is good judgment, sensible foresight. Earn; save; lay by enough to keep the wolf away from the door when the hearse with its sable plumes halts to receive its freight of nothingness. And then?

You see, a man sort of hates to close his account and take his name off the books of the bank of which he has been for so many years an honest and honorable and respected customer. Any man, thrifty or shiftless, dislikes to die. He hates to die. For in all God's world there is nothing quite so worthless as a dead man. A minute ago that man was worth fifty million dollars. Now he is poorer than the poorest pauper in the almshouse. He doesn't own the shroud in which he is clothed.

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Nor the casket in which he sleeps. Nor the grave in which he is interred. The shroud and casket have a monetary value. The body has none. It hasn't even the value of individuality. A minute ago he was the Honorable Dives Midas, or the Very Reverend Melchizedek Howler, or Major-General Julius Napoleon Centerfire; now he isn't anything. He is the saddest and most insignificant of all human things, a "has been", for we speak of him as "The late Mr. So and So". He used to be somebody. He is less than nothing. For he isn't even "he" nor "him" any more. He is "it", with a little "i". We sever his last connection with the human race and classify him among "things", taking away even his personal pronoun. No wonder a thrifty man who has been somebody—anybody—in his day hates to die.

And he doesn't have to die. There is no need of a thrifty, forehanded man dying. Only the thriftless perish. If a man begins in time the cultivation of a habit of thrift will keep him alive forever.

If he saves his money he adds to his deposits in "The Department Mercy" so beautifully described by Mr. Edward L. Robinson in a paper read before a previous session of this Association; if he saves his wages he saves his sympathy, his patience, his kindness; if every time he adds a little bit of his money to what he has already got he adds a little bit to his generosity, his neighborly helpfulness, his unselfishness, his charity, he'll have just a little bit more every pay day.

Then when he appears at the little wicket in the big pearly gate and says, "Well, here I am at last—there's one thing you can put off only so long"; St. Peter will say, "Have you your deposit book?"

And the thrifty man will hand it over with an anxious face, wondering if he is going to get one of those pleasant little "red ink" reminders of an everlasting overdraft.

And the books won't agree, any more than the depositor's book ever agrees with the cashier's account down here. And just as the man is growing nervous the saint, who has been comparing the two books with a smiling face, will say:

"Why, man, your book of Forgettery is an eternity out of balance with your book of Remembrances. There are a thousand transactions you haven't entered at all."

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And holding the thrifty man's book of "givings-away" in one hand, he will open the gate wider than Sunday with the other, and say:

"Come in, man, come in; you've got a balance here you can't spend in ten million years."

You see, down here we measure a thrifty man's fortune by what he leaves. Up there they count it by what he gave away.

There are two systems of thrift. One is just as thrifty as the other. Only one lasts a few million years longer than the other.

That's all.

To his fellows of the church he was always cordial generous and open-hearted. In an address of welcome to a brother of the ministry, who had come to fill the pulpit of a Pasadena Church, he poured out his warmth of affection in characteristic fashion:

We welcome you as soldiers welcome a comrade, a new man on the firing line. A champion who is no friend of Goliath. A man who will not fall down before he is pushed, a preacher who preaches the truth by instinct and preaches the gospel from habit. We welcome a shepherd who can tell a wolf from a sheep without looking into a natural history. Who knows a hypocrite by his whine and a Christian by his life, and a sinner by his rags. You are welcome as the sunshine to the roses, as the rains to the wheat fields, as the bees to the flowers, welcome as December sunshine. Welcome as tourists in January. Welcome as gifts on Christmas. Welcome as a bride at a wedding, and a baby at a christening.

His addresses, while always richly humorous, contained many jewels of sound and wholesome philosophy:

Great things don't amount to much. Life is made up of little things. You can travel out West for a thousand miles and never see a mountain, but it is the greatest farming country in the world. I have known men who were so great they were of no account. You have seen trees so big you could not tie a horse to them. I have heard preachers who knew so much you could not understand a word they said, and once in a while you go into a house where they have a Bible so big they never read

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it. It is easier to be great than it is to be humble. I never tried being great, but if it is any harder than it is to be humble, I don't believe anybody on this earth ever was great. I never stumbled over a two-story house in my life, and I have been where there were thousands of them. Brick in the sidewalk. Never had a lightning rod run through me—sliver. Never knocked my brains out—stabbed my toe. I never had a cow bite me, but I have had a little bit of a steel-blue wasp, not nearly as big as the littlest cow in Jersey, prod me with its tiny bayonet so that I could not catch my breath for five seconds, and when I did catch it I hollered with it.

As toastmaster at a Board of Trade banquet, in his introduction of the eloquent Southern speaker, Dean Baker P. Lee of Los Angeles, his own Southern imagery was no less eloquent:

I once saw a farm during a pilgrimage in Kentucky that I would like to own. Not for the farm, but for the brook that runs through it. It was a liquid run of innocent crookedness. Crooked? A combination of Beef Trust and Standard Oil would be straighter than the golden rule in comparison with it. It goes wandering through the green meadow as though all the year were June, and it had nothing to do but kill time and loiter about in shady nooks and sunny beaches. Crooked? Not a silver-plated shiner that flashes his glittering scales in the sunlight down in the limpid ripples can tell whether he is going upstream or down.

The purple-plumed iron weed and the bending golden rod, bowing to each other with stately grace across the singing brook don't know whether they are standing on opposite sides, or if they are on the same side, which side it is. All the way across that meadow it plays hide and seek with itself, boxing the compass in its erratic wanderings every hundred feet. It came into the meadow, I think, when the wind anemones were blooming in the lee of the hills that fringe the farm. "Oh, my beautiful darlings," it said, "I will stay here near you." But the wind flowers passed away and the violets opened their blue eyes and the buttercups shone in the grasses of the meadows. "I have lost my sweethearts," said fickle little brook, "but the meadow

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is beautiful since you came into it, and I will stay here until you are gone."

And it turned again and loitered to the north, where the wind flowers died, and eddied to the east, where a bank of violets looked shyly down at him with their great purple eyes, and he strolled to the south, where the buttercups, none abashed, laughed merrily in the golden sunlight, and he sauntered to the west, where the wild rose, shivering a little was just trying on her new spring dress, which wasn't long enough yet to cover her round, wine-red arms. And by and by the violets closed their dear little eyes, and the buttercups faded, and the little brook, who had got back nicely to the place where he ran under the fence to get into the meadow when he first saw the flowers, rippled slowly over the wild rose again, who was now in full dress and wore her lovely pink bonnet, and had clusters of buds all the way from her throat and shoulders down to her waist. "Ah me," he murmured, "my friends are gone, and I am so lonesome, I was just going to run down to the sea and drown myself. But you are so beautiful I want to stay here where I may see you."

And so Violet and Buttercup were laid away with poor little Bloodroot and Sailor's-breeches, and by this time the little brook had so many playmates that Wild Rose and Sweet Brier only saw him when he came around to that corner of the meadow. He ran about all the time singing down little runs with the most inimitable trills, babbling with a family of great hard-headed rocks that had settled on the edge of a pool and gone into the moss business, whispering to the blue flags clustered under the low bank, playing with the tall reeds that fringed the still pools, and lingering a long time with the groups of colt's foot where the waters were shallow. There were so many things to see and so much to say in this meadow, no wonder the little brook ran about in it all summer before at last, when the wild rose had thrown away the pretty pink bonnet and put on the little red winter hood, and the rushes were brown and the colt's foot withered, and the goldenrod was gray and the purple iron-weed was plumed with tufts of feathery brown, it turned to the lower end of the meadow and creeping under the fence went lingering away to the river, running very slowly, because it knew it was leaving Kentucky.

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Never, to my knowledge, did he attend a banquet or a large public gathering of any kind that, whether on the programme or not, there was not an insistent call for some contribution from him, and those who heard him most often and knew him best, never ceased to marvel how he rose to the occasion, no matter what the topic was or the type of listeners there to be entertained, and how he always seemed to be full of the subject in hand, with or without preparation.

One happy toast he gave at the wedding supper of our son, Roy to Helen:

A toast to the bride! Fairest and sweetest of brides! And a health to the bride means also "hail to the bridegroom", for they are now and forever inseparable—one in everything. An hour ago, like the Dauphin of France and the "daughter of Spain",

"He was the half part of a blessed man,
Left to be finished by such as she;
Whose fullness of perfection lay in him."

But Pastor Freeman and I "joined" these two silver currents to "glorify the banks that bind them in." I am the richest man but one in all this company. For I have just received the largest wedding fee ever paid a minister in all this land. My grateful son has enriched me with a daughter whose preciousness cannot be measured in any terms of value. And he—most happy man—can say, with Valentine—

"Why man, she is mine own,
And I as rich in having such a jewel,
As twenty seas, if all their sands were pearl,
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold."

The bride! God bless her! A thousand times in a thousand ways, God bless her!

It is impossible to give any illustrations of his ability to entertain in the social group, but always he was the center and life of conversation, and it pleased him

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much when I said after one of those occasions that his mind sometimes reminded me of a rag bag. You could put your hand in and you always brought out something useful, but it never matched anything else that was in there, and it was always a surprise. I have often regretted that it was not possible to have had a verbatim report of some of his most marvelous quips and turns and keenest humor, which were frequently born when he was waking out of a sound sleep in the middle of the night or the early morning. His custom of starting the day with a whistle or a song or a story was largely the text for the constant cheer which he preached by the spirit hour in and hour out under all conditions of life.

On July 14, 1903, he was appointed as one of the Commissioners of the City of Pasadena, serving on the Fire and Parks Committee. He enjoyed this service very much, because of his association with the men of the city and of his vital interest in all that pertained to municipal life. As is usual, the meetings of the city commissioners did not always run smoothly, but he was soon known as the oiler, and many a wordy war was saved by an interjection of some remark of his, which dissipated differences of opinion. If this might be called a political appointment, though there was no ground for such a term, it is the only one of the kind that he ever occupied, and he accepted it because of his personal friendship for Mr. William H. Vedder, who was then Mayor of the City of Pasadena.

His evident delight in this appointment reveals itself in a letter to an old time newspaper friend:

DEAR MAN:

Yes, I got paper which was all right and good, and your letter, which was a hundred times better.

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You are "doing a preaching stunt"? Did you just find it out? You blessed old fellow—your whole life has been a gospel of good cheer, and patience and hope and courage. Your life has been and is an evangel of manhood and manliness. I love every bone in your great big body!

Yours as ever,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

Pastor Temple Baptist Church, Los Angeles.

Police Commissioner
Park " }
Fire " } Pasadena.

Everybody takes the hat off to ME!

His sixtieth birthday was the occasion for many congratulations and felicitations from old friends and new, and the ten years following that were among his ripest and mellowest in kindly contemplation, serene and joyous expectation of future usefulness.

To an inquiry sent him as to how it felt to be sixty, he made this reply:

Well, my boy, it feels rather crowded. There are so many more people in the world than there were when I took up my homestead claim. When I landed on this planet, there wasn't a soul in Los Angeles that I would go across the street to shake hands with. (There was no city of Los Angeles, in fact.)

"A great many old people say they feel just as young at sixty as they did at twenty. Is it that way with you?"

Not by forty happy years, my boy. No man and fewer women, can be as young at sixty as at twenty. When I enter a room now, I instinctively select the chair I want to sit in. I pick out the one that is the easiest to get out of. For it takes me longer to get up than it did at twenty. I do not love the kind-hearted, stupid people who insist on my sitting down in a cavernous easy chair with a backward inclination and a foot rest which I cannot reach. For then there is a life-and-death struggle when I would emerge. I find myself agreeing with the Arab philosopher, "It is easier to walk than to run, to stand still than to walk, to sit down than to stand, to lie down than to sit up, to sleep than to wake."

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“But you are still very vigorous?”

Oh, I do my daily stunts. But I don’t rush at my work with a war-whoop, as I used to. I have a stroke of paralysis every day, right after my noontime dinner. It lasts about an hour and is incurable. I break and lose more spectacles every week than I used to break in five years—when I didn’t wear any. I can hear a great deal better than I did in younger days. For I can’t hear a thing with my left ear, and I use that—oh, very, very often—to rest the one I can hear with. So, though I don’t hear so much, I hear a great deal better. Much better.

“Is there as much fun in the world as there used to be?”

More; a great deal more. Because there are more people in it. And people are the funniest things this side of the grave. Monkeys tire me, but people amuse me. Yes, there is more fun in the world than there used to be. And more sorrow and trouble, and care, and heartache. And more goodness, and love and gentleness, and kindness. And the laughter, and sweetness, and gentleness has multiplied far more rapidly than the trouble.

“Would you like to be young again?”

Indeed I would, my boy. And I’m going to be—when I get to be about ten or twenty years older. But I don’t want to be young again in this world. Because then I would grow old again. It is a sign of weakness—intellectual, physical and moral weakness—to want to be younger in this life. A man ought to be ashamed to have such a feeling. One of our boys, Robert, once wrote to me on one of my birthdays: “A man’s years are his retainers, and the more birthdays he has the stronger and greater is his following.” That’s about the way it feels to be sixty.

AT 60

“Halt!” cry the bugles, down the column’s length;

And nothing loath to halt and rest am I.

For summer heat hath somewhat taxed my strength,

And long the dusty ways before me lie.

The dew that glittered when the echoing horn

Called reveille to greet the waking day,

The cool sweet shadows of the cheery morn,

The birds that trilled the bugles’ roundelay.

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Heated and hushed seems now the balmy air,
So soon its songs and pleasant shadows passed;
Our ambushed foes lurked in each woodland fair,
On every smiling plain we found them massed.

The light young heart that made a jest of life
And laughed at death when we broke camp at dawn,
Changed are their merry songs for shouts of strife,
Or hushed where valor mourns a comrade gone.

And loitering here awhile at "rest at ease",
I note the shadows falling to the east;
Behind me, plume crowned, looms the hill whose trees
At daybreak promised love, and joy and peace;

Beckoned us on, when morning time was bright,
To certainty of victory and rest;
And now—'tis afternoon; 'twill soon be night,
And I have passed the green hill's waving crest.

"Forward!" the bugles call; ready am I;
For though my step has lost its springing gait,
I am more prompt to march, and to obey.
Less apt to question and to hesitate.

Yet, when some belted trooper gallops by,
I lift my eyes, warned by the swift hoofs' tramp,
And hail him, with the infantryman's cry,
"Ho, Comrade! tell me, how far is't to camp?"

The summer of 1905 was again spent in Europe, our younger son accompanying us. Mr. Burdette went as delegate to the World Conference of the Baptist Church in London, where he was a conspicuous figure in the conference, preaching in the pulpits of the London Baptist Churches. He often referred to an English custom which called upon him to read from the pulpit of Shoreditch Chapel, Sunday, July 15, 1905, the following notice:

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“Mrs. Henery wishes to return thanks to God for safe deliverance”, commenting that children would be better born if all mothers were willing to publicly thank God for them.

The trip at this time was confined to England and France and he returned to take up his work at Temple Church in the fall.

When we passed through Chicago on our return from abroad, we stopped to see “the tribe”, especially Mollie, who was not well. Anxiety filled our hearts as we journeyed across the continent, and was not lessened as the days went by. Mr. Burdette was devotedly attached to her, as his frequent letters to he through the years had proven. When the message came that she had passed on, he went to his study, closed the door and sought the comfort he had so often suggested to those who had mourned. Then to his father he wrote:

SUNNYCREST, PASADENA, CAL.

DEAR FATHER:

Saturday.

I cannot write today. I cannot see the page and the pen trails away by itself. The house is quiet and lonesome and still, as though she had passed away from our own doors, here at Sunnycrest.

Violet had planned a little home out here for her. She was going to build a little cottage for her, down by the sea, this winter, which should be her home for the quiet “afternoon years”. And the Father has taken her to her own home.

I did not realize how much she filled my life. I look for her now in the rooms of this house, as I would not look if I know she were yet in the land of the living. I find myself looking into the door of an empty room, as though I half expected to see her. Then she must be nearer to me now than she was before she went away.

You cannot see the dear dead face. Nor can I. Then she will never seem dead to us. We will be expecting to see her, to hear her. And then, some day, we will.

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I cannot write. I can only look out at the mountains and wonder what it is that has happened to change all the world in an hour. Only a few minutes ago I answered a telegram from a man in Peoria. He had heard that some one dear to him in Pasadena was dead. He wired me, in his fear, to find out for him, tho' he is a stranger to me. I wired back to him—"She is well." And while I prayed to hear good news from Mollie, the telegraph tells me—"She is dead."

God give you peace—peace to all the households of her kin that loved her so.

I am not coming East. The day when my coming could have helped her has passed. If I have not written my love on the days that have gone, it is but little use or need to speak it now. Living, she knew well how dearly I loved her. She knows it even better now.

During the spring of 1908, he wrote to his sister Jo:

We are circumnavigating the old mill pond the same old way, with every hour of the day filled in. I had a very strenuous time yesterday afternoon, a trouble that focussed upon the fooliest and uselessest thing of all things to do; the writing of an anonymous letter. I began with two of the people involved, in my study, and sent for one after another until there were seven prosecutors and defendants, changing sides from time to time as new evidence was introduced. It was a very stormy, trying four hours, but before I let go of them, I had secured the necessary amount of admissions and concessions, made them all shake hands, delivered seven personal and one general little lecture, and sent them away, all happy and relieved, five of them smiling, two of them weeping. Guess how many women there were!

So you may know what a relief it was to go in the evening to a very beautiful reception at the opening of the Valley Hunt Club, where everybody had on their "glad rags", where everybody was smiling, where the rooms were noisy with the din of happiness, real or assumed, and merrymaking, music and dancing. Considering what I had crawled through in the afternoon, I felt like the Prodigal Son, and, of course, took all the music and dancing and merrymaking to myself. I know there was, even in that concourse of happy people, heartache

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and concealed pain, and, no doubt, the usual amount of human jealousy, but it was not on the surface and I did not see it and I did not think about it, and if I had not been an old man and a minister of the gospel, I would have danced. Then the rooms would have been cleared.

Why is it that the people who have most need of dancing, who dwell every day of the week with human sorrow and sin and foolishness and weakness and trouble, are not permitted by the frowns of society to dance the most? When I get to Heaven, where we can do as we please, if any angel strikes up a strain of "rag-time" on a harp, you will see your old brother tripping it down the golden street. I find I am growing unministerial.

As the following summer approached the need of rest and change developed into a short trip to Europe, but one of great delight to Mr. Burdette, as it was our first trip to Ireland. "Pilgrim's Progress" had been the delight of his early boyhood, and many and many a time had it furnished a topic, an illustration or a quotation for his later literary work. His diary for July 22, 1908, was headed:

In Bunyan Land. At Elstow, where John Bunyan lived a few years after his marriage. On to the Moathouse in Elstow Green, where Bunyan used to preach. Sat in his pulpit seat. Full of drawers. One old bench—original in "tiny children's room". Elstow Church, where Bunyan used to ring the bell—climbed the steep winding stairs to belfry—48 of them with very high falls. Both of us probably lamed for life. Loitered across village green, where Bunyan used to play "tit-cat" on Sunday and where he was converted. Back to Bedford. Saw the old jail steps. Visited Bunyan Baptist Meeting House, where are his sixty books in early edition—"Pilgrim's Progress" in 108 languages. Bought six copies of "Pilgrim's Progress" published by Elstow Meeting. My fondest boyhood dreams did not dare to picture me enjoying such a rare day fifty years hence.

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On his sixty-fourth birthday he was in Ireland and wrote a characteristic letter to a friend, a deacon of Temple Baptist Church, breathing the same sane philosophy:

THE SOUTHERN HOTEL,
WATERVILLE (COUNTY KERRY), IRELAND,
July 30th, 1908.

MY DEAR DR. DOZIER:

I woke up this morning with the feeling upon me that my figure had altered during the night. And upon taking my temperature with the calendar, I found that my diagnosis was correct. I was 63 when I went to bed last night, and this morning I am 64. However, the change is perfectly normal and I know it will never happen again. It will be something else the next time.

Well, I am well satisfied to grow old. As the woman said about her husband's being resigned to die, "He has to be". I have no desire to be younger, and I wouldn't want to live my life over, if I was offered the chance. I haven't made the best of it I could have done, but I have lived it. The "afternoon land" has been very pleasant to me; I am sure that "at evening time it will be light", and I will be glad to see the morning dawn, for that will begin the new life—the only new opportunity for living better that we will have.

Give my birthday greeting to my "dear children", and say to them they have never put one white hair in my head, nor an ache into my heart. They have been, and they are, a daily joy to me. They are the light of my evening time. Morning and evening do I thank God for bringing them into my life. "My dearly beloved, my joy and my crown." God bless you, every one.

Affectionately your Pastor,
ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

From the time he began newspaper work upon the Peoria *Transcript* in the late 60's until the end of his life he was never without a newspaper connection. These included Peoria *Transcript*, Peoria *Review*, Bur-

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lington *Hawk-Eye*, Brooklyn *Eagle*, Philadelphia *Times* and finally the Los Angeles *Times*.

His contributions to the *Times* began not long after he came to California in 1899, and continued to within a few months of his death.

His first contributions were to the *Times Magazine*, and were in the style of his usual humorous philosophy. In 1900, when he made his first trip to Europe, he made an agreement with the *Times* to write his impressions in a weekly letter to the *Magazine*. After his retirement from the active pulpit of Temple Baptist Church, he was asked by the *Times* to become its pastor and occupy the column pulpit in the daily newspaper, and while there was never any formal acceptance of the offer, he continued through many years to contribute a column two or three times each week.

His relation with the *Times* staff was always the same inspiring, genial and delightful one that made him beloved of the *Hawk-Eye* in the early days of his newspaper work. There was always a cordial and affectionate relation between him and General Harrison Gray Otis, the owner of the *Times*, and this is indicated in many letters that passed between them touching on topics of common interest, and in their frequent exchanges of personal courtesies.

On October 1, 1910, the Times Building was destroyed by an explosion of dynamite, the explosion planned and carried out by part of the band of dynamiting union labor leaders because of the hatred incurred by the *Times* for its persistent and insistent fight for the open shop. Fire followed immediately upon the explosion, and twenty-one employees of the *Times* lost their lives in the tragedy.

Within an hour after the awful disaster, some mem-

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ber of the *Times* staff telephoned the house to ask Mr. Burdette and myself to come to Los Angeles, but the message was not responded to until daylight, when a second telephone message brought to my consciousness the conditions in Los Angeles. Mr. Burdette was spending the night in Riverside, and so he did not get the communication.

I got in my machine soon after daybreak and went to Los Angeles, going first to the Receiving Hospital, where I saw arranged in various cots some of the victims of that awful disaster. Upon inquiring, I found there were others at the various hospitals, and I went at once to the Clara Barton Hospital, where Arlie Elder, the friend of my son Roy, was dying. I remained there to give such assistance to the family as was possible, and then began the rounds of the other hospitals.

General Otis, who was on his way home from a trip to Mexico, reached Los Angeles about two o'clock in the afternoon, and together with two or three members of the *Times* staff, and the family, I went to the Southern Pacific Depot to meet him. With his characteristic unrelentless vigor, and stirred by deepest sympathy for those who had suffered, he stepped to the platform of the car, and before he descended, raising his right hand and extending his other to the crowd, he said in a most dramatic voice, "The fight will still go on!" Fearless as ever, he returned to his home, to which private detectives were soon called because of a suspicious package found under the window of his own residence, and which, taken to the middle of the street and exploded, proved to be another attempt made upon his personal life.

As soon as Mr. Burdette returned to Pasadena, we again took up the rounds where sympathy was needed,

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and through those trying hours and days he proved himself again the comforter and the good soldier that he was, absolutely fearless. The matter of conducting the services for the dead was a very serious undertaking at a time when all Los Angeles was stirred, some with feelings of revenge, and others with a criminal determination to still continue their dastardly work.

I well remember the morning he went to his study to prepare the oration which was to be held in Temple Auditorium, in a pulpit where love and sympathy and salvation had been the continued theme. He went with an earnest prayer in his heart that he might be just to all, comforting to those who needed it, sympathetic with the weakness and foolishness of those who needed sympathy, fearless of those who under their strained mental condition might seek to do further harm. As can be well understood, all were under special strain.

We who were responsible for conditions of the Auditorium had it thoroughly guarded and inspected, for of course there was to be gathered on this occasion all who sympathized with the *Times*. Trained nurses were provided to look after those who might need them, and with a hush and bated breath the audience gathered. Gen. Adna R. Chaffee, retired, my personal friend, asked to sit with me in my box, not knowing what might happen.

On the stage were fourteen gray caskets, all but lost in a wilderness of flowers and flags, the offerings of the people. As Mr. Burdette, revered by the *Times* men as though he were their formal chaplain, stepped on to the platform, he never seemed more serene, more courageous. His voice, tender, yet strong, lacking nothing in fire, yet full of solace, with a heart vibrant in its sym-

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pathy for the living even as it bled with grief for those that were gone, Mr. Burdette delivered a most masterly oration. This was afterwards emblazoned in bronze on the monument that stands as monitor over the remains of the victims of the disaster, the oration being headed, "Sons of Duty", with these verifying words: "From the thrilling discourse pronounced by Rev. Robert J. Burdette of 'Ours' over the lifeless fragments of the victims."

High tide in a sea that washes every shore of the world—a tide whose searching fingers with the sensitive touch of the blind reach wherever water runs or the sun shines—the great pulsing tide of human events that men call "news" and the world-circling brotherhood of the press calls "The Story". Clicking off the keys of a thousand wires from a thousand centers of interest; wig-wagging from the fighting tops of the battleships of all nations; the all-beholding sun, serving his apprenticeship to the new service of the press, flashing his helios from the signal station of the armies of the world; semaphores repeating the tale of scientific and exploring expeditions across the deserts—all the news of Babel, translated into the Morse alphabet, thronging with more tongues than Rumor into the busy rooms of the *Times*.

Midnight, and at editorial desks in news rooms, at the cases of the compositors and the machines of the linotypers, at the key of the Western Union and Postal Telegraphs, down in the press room, under the strong lights of the engravers' tables—everywhere Life, exultant, joyous, abundant. Men and women happy in their work; enthusiastic in their occupation.

Turn of the tide. The hour of the midnight passing the glittering battalions of the constellations in review. Orderly march of the stars, crossing the zenith, ending the journey of Yesterday, beginning the campaign of Today, still moving toward the ever-vanishing camp of Tomorrow. The hand of the Mighty Angel who keeps the calendar of God tore off the page dated "Friday, September 30th, 1910", and revealed, white and clean, unsullied as the petals of the lily of the resurrection, "Saturday, October 1st"—the newest, purest, happiest

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day in the old, old world, a gift from the hand of God, ready for this world of men to write the story of the new day on the tablets of history in such characters of light or darkness as they would.

It is the turn of the Tide. "One o'clock and a pleasant morning. All's Well!" called the Angel of the Watch.

Duty, eldest daughter of God, passed along the lines of men standing at their appointed posts in the world of toil and struggle, doing the bidding of the great Master Workman with the hands and brains and hearts of working men. Clad in the uniform of God's workers, the garb of workingmen, their hands holding the implements of trade and profession—wage-earners and bread winners, every one. Gathering from the ends of the earth and shaping for the intelligence of men the story of the day—the news of the world; its deeds, its hopes, its fears, its pleasures and ambitions, its triumphs and defeats, its loyalty and treacheries, its worship and its blasphemies; the story of how men were keeping faith with God, or violating His first commission, when He placed man in Eden—when all the world was Eden—with the command to dress the garden and to keep it fair—to keep it for God.

Even God cannot keep His world without the yoke fellowship of men. Sings Elizabeth Browning for the great violin maker:

"Should my hand slack, I would rob God;
He could not make Antonio Stradivarius' violins
Without Antonio."

Duty walked down the busy line of these sons of fidelity. She called the roll of honor beside the cradle of the new-born day.

"Churchill Harvey-Elder, assistant city editor; J. Wesley Reaves, private secretary to Harry Chandler; Harry L. Crane, assistant telegraph editor; R. L. Sawyer, telegraph operator; John Howard, compositor."

And one by one, with voices clear and steady, the men answered:

"Here!"

And Duty went on calling the roll:

"J. C. Galliher, linotype operator; Grant Moore, machinist; Edward Wasson, compositor; Elmer Frink, linotype operator."

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ator; Eugene Caress, linotype operator; Frank Underwood, compositor; Fred Llewellyn, linotype operator."

One by one the men lifted their heads from their work and answered in tones strong and confident:

"Here!"

Again Duty called the names of the relief on guard:

"Charles Haggerty, pressman; Charles Gulliver, compositor; Carl Sallada, linotype operator; Howard Cordaway, linotype operator; Don E. Johnson, linotype operator; Harry L. Flynn, linotype operator; W. G. Tunstall, linotype operator.

Clear and strong came the voices of the men:

"Here!"

And Duty reported to the Heavenly Father—the Great Master Workman:

"Every man in his place in the ranks. Every man in the uniform of God's workmen—the garb of a workingman, with the weapons of his service, the implements of his trade and calling in his hand. Each man fully equipped with the gifts of God for his appointed work—clear brain, skilful hand, faithful heart. Each man earning his daily bread with his daily toil. 'As the Father worketh hitherto', and as Jesus the Son wrought at his earthly task until he could cry, 'It is finished', so these children of Duty serve at their appointed tasks until He who gave them toil shall call them to rest."

"Know they that they work amid unseen perils?"

"They know," replied Duty, "but of that they speak not. They know they eat their bread on the smouldering crater of a volcano, but of that they speak not. Their hands are steady; laughter falls sometimes from their lips; courage throbs in their hearts. They have their commission of Thee, and they ask no more. In this consciousness, O Mighty Father, they 'stand sure, stand fast, stand firm, stand true'. It is the blazon on the standard of the journal in whose ranks they serve."

High and clear, like a herald trumpeting the advent of the new day with the prophecy of hope, rang the voice of the Angels of the Watch:

"One o'clock and ten minutes! A pleasant morning!
All's Well!"

Crash and thunder of the forces of destruction. Roaring of the powers of murder and red-handed anarchy. The purple

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night is polluted with the lurid flames leaping from the abyss of horror. The silver stars are eclipsed by the clouds of strangling smoke. The swaying walls fall inward, crackling with the flames; set on fire by fiendish hate—by the crawling cowardice of assassination. The night shrills with awe and terror.

The eyes that see the awful holocaust pray for blindness to shield them from the spectacle. The ears that hear the screams for help, thrilled with death agony, pray for deafness to shut out all sounds that affright the night. Earth yawns to hide the terror. Angels look over the battlements of heaven in wondering amaze that such chaos of sin and crime might be in the world for which Christ died. Hell itself shudders with fear at the sight of the hell more terrible than its own flaming dungeons which its emissary had kindled on earth.

And in the midst of this, men tell us to be calm, and to "suspend judgment". But to most men, God gave red blood instead of ice water for their pulsing veins and human hearts. Did you see young Howard, keeping his vigil of forty hours watching on the crumbling brink of that awful pit of death at First and Broadway for his father, noting every warped and twisted beam of steel dragged from above the bodies of the dead, watching the sifting of every spadeful of cinders, until at last the workmen uncovered what had been his father?

Stand beside him, fasting, yet not knowing hunger, unsleeping yet unwearied; and ask him to "suspend judgment!" Go to these mourners here today, whose aching hearts cannot know until the great judgment day which casket of gray holds the dust dearer to them than their lives, ask them to be judicial in act, justice to all in their hearts! Not twenty-four hours ago, some man barking at the heels of the mourners, publicly censured the "exasperating attitude of the *Times*".

The exasperating attitude of the *Times*! What is its attitude? Standing here today, a fellow-mourner with this immense concourse of mourners. Its body draped with the coarse sackcloth of woe; its face veiled with the fold of crêpe which hides its tear-blinded eyes as it bows itself in speechless anguish above its dead. Look upon this circle of caskets, jewel cases of precious dust—whom does this scene "exasperate"? I tell you, there are men sitting here beside the wives and children and the fellow-workmen of these heroic dead, their

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comrades and yours—Harry Andrews, Harry Chandler, Gen. Harrison Gray Otis—each one of whom would give his own life to call back to desk and case, to machine and press, these dead who died at their posts.

Once more Duty marshals her guard before the Great Commander. Once more she calls the roll of fidelity.

“Are they all here?”

Every man. Not one shirked his duty. Not one fled from his post. To the immortal glory of the dead, and the honor of the living, not one woman who wrought at her task in that building perished. In the wild storm of fear and death there was no panic. The strong helped the weak. The brave encouraged the fearful. The calm soothed the nervous. Those who escaped live with honor. Those who died stand here in their ranks to answer their names, robed in the white garments of victory; all marks of pain gone from their faces; the calloused palms of toil soft already with the tranquility of their rest. Every man whose name was called on earth, has answered “here” before the throne.

Fragrant with honor be their names forever. Green as the palms that will wave above them in Hollywood be their memories. Everlasting peace be to the lives that suffered. God’s will—his righteous will—his will of justice—be done.

When brutal feet are trampling
Upon the common weal,
Thou dost not bid us bend and writhe
Beneath the iron heel;
In Thy name we assert our right—
By sword, or tongue, or pen,
Even the headsman’s ax may flash
Thy message unto men.

Thy will, It bids the weak be strong,
It bids the strong be just;
No lip to fawn, no hand to beg,
No brow to seek the dust.
Wherever man oppresses man
Beneath Thy liberal sun,
Oh, Lord, be there Thine arm made bare,
Thy righteous will be done.

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When the procession moved away from Temple Auditorium, guarded as it was by a platoon of police, to the corner of Hill and Fifth Street, where there was waiting a line of street cars, one for each casket and the friends, there was never seen probably in all the world such a funeral procession as those trolley cars to Hollywood Cemetery, and the little man, with his courage, fearlessness of speech, heart filled with sympathy and love, might be said to have been the central figure of it all. It was one of the greatest efforts of his life, and several days followed before he could return to the normal activities, so stirred was he with the sense of cruel injustice to the innocent, his thankfulness that our own son Roy who had but recently left the *Times*, was not one of the victims, and his outspoken condemnation of the spirit which had made this possible.

On November 15, 1911, in the cemetery at Hollywood, a granite memorial by the *Times* in memory of its martyred dead, was dedicated, and as chaplain of the *Times*, Dr. Burdette delivered the dedicatory oration:

"It is the cause," said Napoleon Bonaparte, "and not the death that makes the martyr". For the mere fact of death is a thing common to all men, hero and coward, saint and sinner, patriot and traitor. But now and again in the great crises of Time, when the thought of the selfish world is set on common things like wealth and fame, and pleasure, God calls for his reserves—a man or a platoon of the 7000 that have not bent the knee to Baal, to stand forth and die nobly, splendidly, sublimely, that right and justice and freedom shall have their witnesses on the earth.

So Socrates drank the deadly hemlock, as one who pours a libation to life, and none died but the men who gave the teacher the poison. So Jesus Christ died on the tree of death, and now to look at the cross, which he made a throne of life, is to live forever. So died Nathan Hale, on a common gibbet, by the

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strangling shame of the hangman's noose, and schoolboys today kiss his name on the page of their history, and repeat, as a living watchword of patriotism his dying words. So died Abraham Lincoln, and the simple grandeur of his life blossomed in his death, and its fruitage comes to its harvest all the days of all the years. So died these men whose memory we come today to honor.

The *Times* newspaper, at its own cost, gently and with all appreciation, refusing the desire of hundreds to unite in the erection of this testimonial, places this memorial, and dedicates it to the memory of the heroic men, soldiers in the ranks of industry, who gave their lives as witnesses to the righteousness of industrial freedom, and who now sleep beneath the shadow of this shaft. But it consecrates it to the living cause for which they died.

This monument is erected here, not that these martyrs may not be forgotten. Love will remember them, and teach their names and their heroism to their children's children, writing the epitaphs of the beloved dead upon the fleshly tablets of the heart, more lasting than inscriptions graven in granite and bronze. But it is here placed, "lest we forget"! For it is a teacher who will not only commemorate the heroism of the men who died, but will inspire anew the cause which lives.

Not only a monument to the dead, but a lighthouse for the living. In the stormy, overclouded days and the dark and starless nights, which yet may come in the life of the nation, it will shine through the tempest as shines a star. It will gleam across the tossing waves, a light that at once warns of danger and guides to safety. So long as it stands, into the storm and stresses of our warring days, into our hearts growing callous and selfish and forgetful, it will call with the thrill of the dead years come to life—

"Remember."

"Remember," the dead will call from their graves. "Remember, not us, but the cause for which we gave the measureless price of our lives. Not us, but the hideous thing which slew us as we toiled. Remember the foul spirit of hate and destruction that in one swift hour of desolation offered upon the bloody altar of anarchy a score of innocent lives, a great

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household of industry, enterprise, intelligence, and much more than all this."

For one cannot trace the way of the waves of this awful tragedy, as they recoil in a hundred directions from the smoking ruins in which the blood of the slain men strove to quench the lurid flames set on by murder. The score of human lives can be counted and listed in the report of the massacre. But the homes paled in mourning, the wives robed in the dark habiliments of widowhood, the laughing little children turned into weeping orphans, love shrouding its sobbing figure in sackcloth, the loneliness bringing heartache into the true camaraderie and loyal yoke-fellowships of labor—who shall measure this in the statistics of cruelty and crime?

The spirit of brutality that is not content to rejoice in the sorrow that is all too common to humanity, but must take the joy and laughter and love that make life's burdens light and its sorrows sweet, and transform the laughter into tears, the joy into bitterness of sorrow, the love into agony of woe, that makes motherhood childless and childhood fatherless—what punishment can be too great for such a spirit of hate and malice?

Oh, Thou Righteous Judge of all the earth—deal Thou between the mourner and the murderer—deal righteously. Oh, Eternal Judge, between the bereaved and the destroyer—between the dead and those whose hands are crimson with his blood! “Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?”

A noble deed transfigures the commonplace into the sublime. Not so many men were slain at Thermopylae as at Waterloo, but the glory of that narrow pass is told in the inscription above the little heap of immortal dust. “Go, traveler, tell at Sparta that we died here in obedience to her sacred laws!”

The holiness of the law has outlived the kingdom of Sparta and the republic of Greece. A score of mission buildings in the west are statelier and nobler in architecture than one on the plaza at San Antonio, but the message to the world—“Thermopylae had her messenger of defeat. The Alamo had none”, has immortalized it. “Hot Springs” is commonplace. “Thermopylae” has its place in deathless song. “The cottonwood” is common and cheap as it sounds. “The Alamo” inspires the patriot and the poet. In all the annals of printerdom—in all the stories of newspaperdom, there is no page of history of

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the types that thrills in all the deep emotions of the tragic drama like this midnight scene in the *Times* Building, when these men, printers and linotype men and editors and press-men, went down to death and ascended to immortality. Heroes of free journalism. Martyrs in the great cause of industrial freedom.

Beneath this shaft of granite and bronze quietly rests their hallowed dust. Under the shadow of pine and palm, emblems of strength and victory, while dreams of peace come to illumine the caressing darkness. How like an afternoon of June the November sunlight covers them, tenderly as a mother draws her veil over the face of the little one she has lulled to sleep with the sweetest music in the world. For them, resting in the dear, cool arms of our mother earth, no fearsome dreams, no waking unto weary days, no troubulous things shall ever come.

For "all their storms are quiet as the sun; and all their restless seas are still and perfumed as the blossoming shore". Lay thy sweet darkness tenderly upon their faces, oh, gentle Earth, even as lovingly as thou didst upon thy breast the thorn-crowned head of the Martyr King, tortured to his death. Upon their breasts we lay the pilgrim staff we break above them at their journey's end. Roses for perfume, lilies for peace, laurel for their glory we twine above their brows. Against the stately pile that keeps their names we rest the inverted torch that means for them not the quenching of the flame of life, but the dawning of the star of immortality.

Above your dust, oh, sacred dead, we consecrate this monument. We dedicate it to the cause for which you died. To free labor for free men; to the unfettered hand; to the unshackled mind; to the free soul.

To the loving memory of the old and the glorious hope of the new day, when all men shall know each other even as God knows men; when the brotherhood of man shall be a fact worldwide, even as it is a truth of God; when all the mistakes of all of us; when all the cruel misunderstandings that have separated and embittered our lives; when all the bitter wrongs we have inflicted, and all the cruel wrongs we have suffered, shall be corrected by infinite wisdom and eternal righteousness; and all the evil and sorrow of our lives shall be fainter than the memory of the vanished cloud of a summer long gone by.

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So moving were these two addresses, a challenge was based on the hearing or reading of them when the jury was being impanelled for the murder trial which followed. A demand was made of the Judge that Dr. Burdette be cited to explain his speech on the occasion of the dedication of the monument. The Court was too wise to give Dr. Burdette another opportunity.

But the opportunity came when there was a service held in memory at the Hollywood Cemetery. Time may have somewhat softened his pronouncement, but his memory had not forgotten when he spoke:

I once stood on the historic plain where the mountains look on Marathon, and Marathon looks on the sea. Almost unconsciously I uncovered my head before the great mound, the Soros, where sleep the heroic Greeks who on an August day 2500 years ago fell as they repelled the outnumbering hordes that swarmed against their little band like locusts of the wilderness.

Two American boys at my side bared their heads. And their American mother bent to kiss the fragrant asphodel—the meadow flower trodden in days of myth and fable by the feet of heroes, and swept by the trailing garments of goddess and nymph. We reverenced the memory of the men who died there. The heroic Greeks, their allies and their bondmen, in defense of their homes and western civilization. Twenty-five centuries—and men remember with reverence their heroism and sacrifice and their victory. Loving and loyal hands builded above them this mound of earth, baptized in their blood.

On the summit of a hill shaped by the hands of the Creator, the mecca year by year of thousands of Americans who make reverent pilgrimage thither, a graceful shaft of granite commemorates the heroism and sacrifice of another little band of heroes standing to the death between their homes and oppression; faithful unto death in their devotion to human freedom—national liberty. Bunker Hill is hallowed by devotion and sacrifice.

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Heroes of the bow and spear were these Greeks of the olden days. Men of the rifle and bayonet were the heroes of Bunker Hill. They met death, running at the head of the charging columns with shouts of defiance, and smote him in the face as they fell.

Here, in our own day, sleep heroes as illustrious. Champions of industrial freedom, slain by the red hands of anarchy, smiting under cover of the darkness.

"Keep thee from me," cried the knight in the days of chivalry, giving his foeman ample time to prepare for onset. The voice of the bugle, singing its challenge high and clear, carries to the enemy the advance of the soldier. A challenging shot, fired wide, was the old-time shout of the sailor, bidding the enemy clear his decks for action. At Marathon, at Waterloo, at Bunker Hill, heroes were slain by heroes.

But these heroic souls who sleep here were murdered as they toiled at peaceful, honorable labor for their daily bread. Three archvillainies there were that conspired against them. Cowardice drew the veil of darkness hiding the movements of the creatures lifting red hands against the lives of the unconscious victims. Murder planned the hellish machine which could most effectually destroy property and life together. Treacherous anarchy, hating all law and order, applied the detonating match that wrought midnight confusion and sudden death.

Then under false names, that were lies, under many disguises, skulking and hiding, in fear and hate, the conspirators fled and for a time escaped.

These things are simple, plain statements of fact. These things are true. They are not spoken in bitterness. If I had a tongue of lightning, a voice of thunder, and my words were leaping flame, I could never tell what happened on that awful October midnight in the *Times* building when these men were murdered. I am prejudging the case of no man. But somebody wrought this deed of anarchy; somebody slew these innocent men.

May God speedily clear from all stain of suspicion the names of all innocent men. And may he as surely bring to the bar of judgment the guilty ones. Can any true man refuse to say "Amen" to this?

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Beside these martyred dead we have no thought for vengeance. Should we strive to utter such a word the sleeping martyred ones would waken to its harshness in this holy place, and whisper to us, "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord." Our lips are sealed. But today, as thousands of years ago, the voice of a murdered brother rises to God from the sodden ground. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

As we wait here, the quiet dead teach us peace and tender forgiveness. The martyrs have forgiven their murderers. But have their murderers forgiven them? If so, they will show their forgiveness to the living.

God's angels of grace keep watch over this sacred ground, God's love keeps it from profanation by unclean hands. Here, at this holy trysting place, its grasses watered by tears of all who love honor, may the Four Daughters of God, Mercy and Truth, Peace and Righteousness, meet to greet and kiss each other about this sepulcher of the martyrs, this beautiful, pitiful mingling place of broken hearts. Their common grief makes them one in their unceasing sorrow. For the kiss that rests tenderly upon one perfumed blossom above the commingled ashes here, touches every sleeping heart beneath, as the lips of God touch the souls of all his race of men. Here comes the earliest sunrise with its glory of hope. Here the meadow lark sings his matin to the morn. Here the evening shadows linger long and tenderly at the time of the evensong and twilight. And here, when the stars look tenderly down upon the shrine of human sacrifice, the mocking bird enchantsthe night with the sweetness of melody.

Death made his darkness noble when he drew into the shadows the men who sleep here. This is a temple of nobility, star lighted forever. Fold them tenderly on thy soothing breast, O mother earth, rest their tired eyes in thy comforting darkness. Hush all their fears and pains in the softness of thy cool, enfolding arms. Let them hear only the whispering of the grasses growing so lightly above them; the bird song at morn and even and at midnight; the sweetest of all the tender echoes of the voices they loved the best on earth. The laughter of little children. The lips that speak, spoke their names on earth with tender intonations of love. The strong voices of the friendship of loyal comrades—faithful unto death. God

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who hath measured unto them the anguish of the cross, reward unto them the joy and glory of the crown. He who hath accounted them worthy of martyrdom, grant unto them the exaltation of the saint.

And teach us with the eloquent silent lips of these sleeping teachers—teach us, standing beside you, to pray for your sake the prayer of the Carpenter of Nazareth, dying in agony upon the cross, praying for those who compassed his death:

“Father, forgive them; they knew not what they did.”

CHAPTER XII

THE CLOSING YEARS

THE latter years of his life were devoted to his writing for the press, occasionally lecturing, numerous addresses on occasions of public interest and importance, to a serene and kindly contemplation of life in all its phases, and correspondence with his old friends, which he maintained faithfully up to the time when the pen, as he said, became "so grievous a burden".

A picture of his life in the last years is given by a newspaper contributor who visited him for the purposes of a sketch and interview.

Every inch of space in his study or "den" seems permeated with his radiant personality. Two sides of the room are almost entirely of glass, through which delegates from the sun's rays come in to play pranks with the gleams of wit that emanate from the heart of the man. The walls are covered with photographs of famous people, principally old newspaper friends of Mr. Burdette, while bookcases are filled with the works he loves. He says his favorite authors are determined by his moods and by circumstances. Sometimes he is a devoted reader of Charles Lamb, while again Shakespeare, Scott, Thackeray and Dickens hold prominent places in his leisure hours. When asked what humorous works he liked best, the merry, characteristic twinkle invaded his eye as he said, "My favorite works of humor? Why, they are the modern historical novels, and the more seriously they take themselves, the funnier they are."

Hanging on one of the study doors is a long, narrow parchment containing a curious Arabian inscription, gotten up for the purpose of warning the devil to keep off the premises. Mr. Burdette secured it when abroad, from an Arab, who assured



MR. BURDETTE IN HIS "DEN" AT "SUNNYCREST," PASADENA

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him that any man who had such an inscription hung on the walls of his home was immune from any interference of the subterranean monarch. The student's desk was littered with manuscripts and correspondence, and in the midst of this literary confusion lay the well-worn Bible, the book that nestles closest in the heart of this man's daily life.

Mr. Burdette always makes his own calendars, and these recording tablets on which the humorist splashes the overflow of effervescent wit would make a unique collection if bound. Three months are usually placed on one card three feet long and one foot wide. Each day is given about a square inch of space, and in these spaces Mr. Burdette keeps a tab on his engagements, usually making some grotesque picture to represent that which is to take place. The day set aside for visiting his tailor was designated by a humorous drawing of a suit of clothes with a hat on a pole. The day for the dentist contained a huge molar. The day Mrs. Burdette was elected vice-president of the Federation of Women's Clubs inspired a remarkable work of art, as did the day his son Robert achieved honors at college.

Four hours and a half of each morning are spent by Mr. Burdette in this den, wrestling over sermons, arranging lectures or attending to correspondence, and if the worker becomes weary, one glance from his windows at the encompassing waves of verdure, and the rugged, deep-cañoned mountains that grandly loom in the distance, gives the needed inspiration, and when the head is again bent over the work, the pen must rush to keep pace with the word music that springs from the heart. Afternoons are set aside for reading, visiting, receiving friends or for working in the garden.

The beautiful home of Mr. and Mrs. Burdette is an example of domestic possibilities. There is perfect congeniality of temperament, and the strongest sense of comradeship between the two. Mr. Burdette's den is at one end of the hall, his wife's at the other, and during working hours they are incessantly industrious, afterwards criticising each other's work, amending, correcting and suggesting. So readily mutual are they in their work, that on two occasions—at Louisville, Ky., and Grand Rapids, Mich.—when Mr. Burdette was detained by impossible railway connections, his wife, who had gone on ahead to be

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ready for such emergencies, took his place on the lecture platform, and filled his engagements to the satisfaction of his audiences.

Mrs. Burdette always accompanies her husband on his lecture tours, believing that wherever he is there is her home. She is very practical, and has the reputation among business men of being one of the best business women in California, while on the other hand, her husband is decidedly a dreamer, a veritable "Rainbow Chaser", and his absent-mindedness gives his alert and vigilant little wife hourly employment. At the same time, however, his philosophical tranquility is a cordial for his wife's intensity.

Mr. Burdette takes unbounded pride in his charming helpmate, and when showing guests her immaculate and orderly study, with the well-groomed desk, the chest of drawers for filing away papers, and many other exquisite furnishings typical of femininity, he said, with something suspiciously like a sigh, "She is so systematic. Now she could get up in blackest night and lay her hands on anything, but I always keep my duds in a bag, and it takes me half a day to find what I'm after!"

Mr. Burdette loves being out of doors, and he is never so happy as when, garbed in overalls, wide hat and stout boots, he works among his flowers. He declares that "houses are only fit to eat and sleep in anyway". Just for recreation this summer, he and his son Roy built a stone wall 300 feet in length around one of the rose gardens, mixing the mortar, lugging the stones and carrying the hod all by themselves, and when the work was finished, a stone tablet bearing the inscription "Pater Filiusque Soli Fecerunt" (father and son alone made it), was set in the wall. Speaking of his preparations for this outdoor gymnasium, as Mr. Burdette called this masonry work, he said laughingly, "Why, we didn't know the meaning of mortar and cement, let alone mixing the stuff, and we had to go to the dictionary to find out."

The first little home in Peoria had been one of struggle and suffering. The home in Burlington had sheltered continued suffering, accompanied with something of success, and was well named, "Heartsease".



MR. BURDETTE IN "HIS" GARDEN AT "SUNNYCREST"

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"Doubting Castle" at Ardmore had been a tent in the wilderness, as it were, and "Robin's Nest" at Bryn Mawr had been a refuge from the weariness and vicissitudes of lecture travel up and down the land. "Sunnycrest," his California home, was established when he came to live among its roses, its birds and its sunsets, all of which appealed to his poetical temperament, comforted and made joyous his latter years.

"Shadow of mountain and smile of the sea,
Orange grove vistas that dimple between;
Ripple of mocking-bird minstrelsy,
Glint of the starlight's silvery sheen;
Beauty and perfume of lily and rose,
Grace of the springtime the glad year through;
Eastward the sunset its glory throws—
"Sunnycrest" kisses a greeting to you!"

The morning of the 25th of March, 1909, while preparations were being made for a large reception, afternoon and evening, on the tenth wedding anniversary, Mr. Burdette slipped on the damp porch, receiving an injury which at the time seemed slight, but which soon developed into a serious condition. Courageous and uncomplaining, he passed through the day with what we afterward realized must have been great suffering, and except that he was unable to get up and down when the night came, he had made no demonstration of how seriously his back was hurt. Medical aid was summoned during the following days, and relief to some extent was offered. Having a long standing engagement to speak at New York at the Associated Press Banquet, we started for the East in April. Before twenty-four hours on the train it was evident that the wisdom of the trip ought to have been questioned. The stay in New York was a brief one, and the

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fulfilment of the engagement was not entirely satisfactory, due to his physical condition. However, this was said of it:

The banquet, which was held at the Waldorf-Astoria, with 700 members present, was addressed by Hon. Rufus Choate, Ambassador from England, the German Ambassador, Senator Patterson of Colorado and Robert J. Burdette.

Mr. Burdette's speech was the personification of wit and humor from beginning to end and was made emphatic and unique by Burdette's peculiar voice and accent—all of which combined to convulse the audience at the end of every sentence.

In the course of his address Mr. Burdette said:

If a man would publish a newspaper called "Blue Pencillings", made up exclusively of the things all the other papers in the town shut out, he would have a circulation equal to the United States Navy which has been around the world and is starting back again. But it would only last a day. The editor wouldn't last quite so long. The publisher would last—oh, maybe ten or fifteen years—with a reduction of time for good behaviour and a chance for a pardon—or maybe a mistrial. But it would be worth getting shot for, if a man doesn't mind being shot.

The publishers have given us better newspapers in this twentieth century than the world ever knew before our day. If it were possible to attain to any sort of perfection in any business, it would seem that we must have reached perfection in the art of news-gathering. But somewhat we have sacrificed, as we have in all lines of business.

We are more capable, more daring, more progressive, more successful, more purposeful—I wonder if men are quite so lovable—if our friendships, in this life of stress, are quite so manly and tender and loyal? You see, between man and man, or man and woman, it isn't an easy thing to make love in a six cylinder automobile hitting the high places at sixty miles per. That's a ride for the nerves. The heart prefers a one-horse buggy, with winding road that leads nowhere, a horse that is given to meditation and a jog-trot; the whip in the socket,

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and the lines wrapped around your leg, and your arms wrapped —oh, pshaw, what's the use?

Times have changed and we must play the game under the new rules. Go ahead and "get out the paper". I believe in today. I am an optimist of the class represented by the man who fell out of the dormer window of a twenty-five-story skyscraper. He counted the windows as he shot downward, until he passed the third floor. Then he chortled joyously, "Well, I am all right thus far".

With some difficulty, and a rest in Chicago, we returned to the Coast, where, in a few days, an unfortunate, serious, brief attack of illness on my part seemed to force him to forget his own physical condition so that he continued with his work. In June we determined to go to our summer cottage at Clifton-by-the-Sea, and while a trained nurse was sent with me, the next morning after arriving Mr. Burdette found it impossible to stand, and that nurse became his constant attendant for the next four months. So serious was his condition that the Associated Press gave out bulletins of his condition, and that brought in return as an expression of his friends from all over the United States, hundreds of letters which gave definite evidence of the hold he had upon the public heart.

And this from one of the rank and file:

As one of Pasadena's ordinary men in the humbler walks of life, I would very much wish to mingle my words of heartfelt sympathy with them for you just at this time; though one feels entirely helpless and the only thing that can be done is with word or pen. I have never looked upon Niagara Falls or seen the big trees of California; *but*; I have heard *your* voice in *sermon* and in *prayer* and *anecdote* revealing those great personal powers and charms that you so eminently possess, and I have seen that intensely pleasant smile, lighting up men's hearts and furnishing them with a God speed to better things. May the best the Lord can give be yours.

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As it became evident that he would probably never be able to assume his duties as Pastor again, the Temple Baptist Church was asked to seek some one to fill the place which he must vacate. Grief at the thought of this was most sincere, and almost unreconcilable in many cases, but we counselled them that possibly he had done his work and that the time had come when Temple Church needed directions along different lines. But the out-pouring of their love to him at that time was such as rarely comes to men before they have passed beyond the consciousness of such expressions.

The resolutions passed by Temple Church most earnestly expressed the attitude of his "flock", especially the section which reads:

Resolved, That Temple Church can best honor God and cherish the memory of Dr. Burdette as pastor and leader by making our position in Christian service, attained under his loving leadership, a stepping stone to a loftier and broader plane of Christian usefulness.

He accepted the illness which followed his injury in 1909 with resignation, patience, and an unfailing belief in the value of the chastened spirit. Indeed, in the following year one of his most effective letters to the *Sunday School Times* dealt with his view of the value of sickness and trouble. It was entitled, "Why I Believe in Sickness and Trouble," and in that he set forth his belief in this wise:

Not because I want to, but because I have to. Because I believe in quinine, which isn't half so sweet as sugar, but is a much better febrifuge. Because I don't believe that an athlete can train for a Marathon race on ice cream soda and fudge. Because I don't believe that pickle and cake are good muscle-builders for the tennis and basket ball girl. Because I believe that the greatest victory of the Revolutionary War was Valley Forge.

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I believe in the strengthening discipline of sickness and trouble because men don't go into a rose garden to look for ship timber. I believe that Napoleon was defeated by his succession of victories, while Washington was victorious through his many defeats. Because I believe that America was discovered while a starving navigator was being turned away from palace doors under the smarting scourge of scientific geographers. Because I believe a man who never had an ache never had a pleasure.

Because a horse that is allowed to feed himself from the bin and have the run of the pasture never wins the race. Because I believe in the old Arab proverb, "All sunshine makes the desert". Because a snow-fed river lasts through the summer drouth. Because Jacob saw a vision that all the world still looks at when his head was pillow'd on a stone in the desert. Because David learned to govern Israel in the cave of Adullam, and Joseph learned high statecraft in an Egyptian prison. Because people who get everything they want and get it easy, die crying for the moon.

Because I believe in this world. I also believe in the spiritual world, but that isn't the one in which we live. And in this "world ye shall have tribulation".

Life at the street level and life in the altitudes are very different. The weather man gave the official temperature of yesterday afternoon, at the hour I was carried into the hospital, unconscious from heat-stroke, as only eighty-nine degrees. But that was up on the roof of a twenty-story building, under the shadow of a protecting canopy, where the air was clean and pure and sweet, even if it was a little warm.

Down where I was at work, laying an asphalt pavement, the hot sun flamed down on the back of my head till my brain seethed. The reflected heat glared up from the paving stones into my face till my eyes went blind. I breathed the hot, foul-smelling dust stirred up by the feet of a thousand horses and the poisonous exhalations from an opened sewer. That's how hot it really was. A hundred and three in the shade and no shade. I tell you, Pilgrims, we don't live up in the breezy observatory of the weather man. We work down in the street, and we live in a tenement.

I do not believe one little bit in the fundamental doctrine of certain—or rather, very uncertain—religious societies and

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schools of art, that "Whatever is, isn't", and conversely, "Whatever isn't is".

I believe in the *reality* of the world into which I was born and in which I live, as firmly as I know I was born. I believe the material world is as real as the eternal world—while it lasts. I don't believe that God gave me eyes just to play a joke on a poor finite creature, taking infinite pleasure in watching me see things wrong all my life.

I don't believe the Creator, who can make things right just as easily as he can make them wrong, gave me sensations which make the roaring of my bones fill the long night with aches and pains, that he might laugh with his smiling angels at the poor fool of a man who thought he was sick when they all knew very well there was nothing the matter with him.

I don't believe he painted an air-drawn picture of a world on a canvas of nothing, that he might amuse himself watching me pant up the non-existent steeps and fall into the uncreated depths, crying for childish fear in the imaginary darkness, and laughing with equally foolish joy at the unsubstantial dream of fabulous sunlight.

I could have no confidence in such a Providence. How could we ask him for bread, when there would be the haunting fear that he might give us a stone, just because our senses of sight and taste which he had given us were so misleading that we couldn't tell one from the other anyhow? To give his children deceiving senses would be the brutality of a heartless man who frightens little children with a broom-and-sheet ghost.

That we do have some imaginary troubles and sicknesses, everybody knows. But these are easily cured by imaginary medicines and imaginary treatment, and can be avoided by imaginary preventives.

But sorrow in the soul of a man today is as real as was the agony in Gethsemane. The fire of human anguish is now as real as the suffering that made Job curse the day of his birth, and smote his sympathizing friends dumb with heartache. "The flesh still quivers when the pincers tear, the blood will follow where the knife is driven." Pain is real as pleasure. Sorrow is absolute as joy. If we would see the crown, we must look at the Cross which it enwreathes as a halo. Anguish made sweet by Love. Pain endured and conquered. Suffering

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made Holy. Peace acquired through affliction. Human courage crowned by Divine compassion. And always, the Human as real as the Divine.

There is no virtue in mere suffering. There is no goodness inherent in pain. Had there been nothing on the Cross but the human figure of the Son of God, writhing in mortal agony, the spectacle had been repulsive. The *submission* to the reality of the cross was its glory. The endurance of actual bodily pain, positive anguish of mind and soul—this set the brilliants, out-shining the stars, in the crown of victory.

For the crown is for a victor. And a victory over nothing is crowned with the shadow of a shadow. A triumph over imaginary foes wins but an imaginary crown.

“Why are afflictions sent upon the people of God?” That is one of the easy questions. I don’t know. And yet I reckon I know as much about it as anybody. I don’t know, for that matter, why afflictions are also sent upon wicked people. I don’t know why innocent children suffer for the sins of their parents. But they do. I don’t know why Abraham Lincoln was assassinated by an actor, vanity-inflated with overwhelming sense of his own importance. I don’t know why Socrates was poisoned while his judges remained in office.

I don’t know why Jesus Christ was crucified while Pilate sat on the judgment seat and Herod continued to pollute a throne with iniquities. I don’t know why, for three hundred years, God’s people, sheep of his hand and people of his pasture, walked on burning plowshares under skies of brass, while storms of persecution rained upon them in every form of horrible torture and fearful death.

But I do know that that is the way the church conquered the world for Christ. I do know that not one god of its persecutors is left in the world today, save as a broken fragment in a temple of dust.

What do I know about pain, and sorrow, and trouble? I know only what everybody knows—I know what has grown out of the heart-soil scarred by the plow and torn by the harrow. I look at the receding storm and I see the splendor of the rainbow. I go into the depths of a murky swamp, and say, “A nest of pestilential fevers”. Lo, at my feet the delicate beauty of an orchid. I catch the perfume of the sandal-wood on the

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edge of the axe. I hear the axes ringing in the forest of Lebanon, and I say, "Death and destruction!" Lo, the fragrance of the carven beams in the temple. For it is the cedar that we call dead—the tree felled and wrought into shapes of grace and use of worship, not the living cedar in the forest—that gives forth its incense of praise.

I search the world over, all its continents, islands and seas, for the sweetest, tenderest, holiest spot it holds, and I kneel beneath the gnarled olives of dark Gethsemane. My soul is made stronger, my thoughts purer, my life nobler, by its agony of renunciation. I look upon the cross of shame—a Roman instrument of torture and humiliation. Lo, it shines above every crown in the world, it glows with a radiance more enduring than the sun throughout the length and breadth of civilization—an emblem of authority, by which princes reign! It gleams in the splendor of heaven above the dome of the universe. It glorifies everything that it shines upon.

The contemptuous phrase of a Roman governor, a brutal sneer at the prisoner whom he feared, and a taunt to exasperate the Jews whom he despised—"Jesus of Nazareth, King"—endures forever. Angels echo it in anthems of exaltation, and "the great multitude, which no man could number", and "every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea", with one mighty voice catch up the scoff of Pilate, and with it ascribe "the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever", unto the Lamb which was slain.

Not unto him who put the cup aside at Gethsemane. Not unto him who came down from the cross and saved himself. But unto him who suffered; who endured the cross—unto him who was slain.

Ah, this old desire to make things easy, to smooth away all the difficulties, to evade all the burdens, to make the way to heaven down hill and sunny weather—it is a sin as old as the race of man. It began in Eden when the tempter said, "Pick out the easy things and the smooth path. Take only what looks good to yourself; reach out after what is a delight to the eyes and is desirable to look upon." "Command that these stones become bread", was the later form of the same temptation.

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And once again it presented itself in the hour of human suffering and weakness, of faintness from pain and hunger and thirst—"and when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, they gave him wine to drink mingled with gall; and when he had tasted it, he would not drink." It was a drug; it would stupefy his senses; it would render pain an illusion; it would make the sacrifice easy. And when he knew what it was, "He would not drink".

There are teachers today who say to us: "Shut your eyes to everything harsh and disagreeable, and if you can't see it, it isn't there. Try our great Ostrich Remedy for all the ills to which human flesh is heir. Stick your head in the sand, and you can't see the lion coming."

The lion is there, just the same, and if you'll stay right where you are and keep your head in the sand a little longer, there will be less ostrich and more lion on the landscape.

What do I know about afflictions? I know only what everybody else knows—that they are guide-posts along the way of the Pilgrimage. If the pathway lies through struggle and pains and fears, patience and love, and foes and fightings, you're pretty sure to be on the right road. What is this mighty "sea of troubles"? That's the Red Sea. Go right ahead and see the glory of God. This is death in the desert? Speak to the rock, a-quiver with the heat glimmer, and see the fountains of life burst forth. That? That's a king wailing the sorrow of a broken heart in the chamber over the gate. You're on the right way. These? A long line of prison "finger-posts"—Peter and John and Paul and Silas—lots of prisons on the right road. This? A storm on Galilee. Good many storms on the "Jesus Way". This headless body? John the Baptist. That one? Paul. This shadowy garden where the starlight gleams softly on the crimson dew of agony falling on the grass blades? Gethsemane. You have to pass through Gethsemane. This fearful hill? Calvary. This burst of glory and splendor of life and joy?

Oh, Pilgrim, this is Easter morn! You've come the right way, and you're Home, Pilgrim, you're Home!

Now, suppose you had avoided all this? Turned back to Egypt? Worshiped Diana, and kept out of prison? Made a little money by the sale of your Christ, like Judas? Gone around Gethsemane? Bowed to Pilate and avoided the Cross?

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Later, writing to his sister, in October, 1909, he said:

This is October 14th. Yesterday we went to Pasadena to see President Taft go by. I saw him. I don't think he recognized me, although we used to be neighbors of the Tafts in Cincinnati. But I have grown this mustache since then and that has changed me a little. And beside, I don't think he was born when we lived there. That might affect his recollection of me somewhat. I saw him about a tenth of a second, while his automobile was breaking the speed limit on Orange Grove Avenue. Then I came back to this blessed little bungalow by the restful sea. The Pacific Ocean never hurries. It is restless, but it takes its time. The surf never beats in rag-time.

The year previous, Mr. Trumbull of the *Sunday School Times* had asked Mr. Burdette for a series of lesson expositions and chapters on Civil War reminiscences, and his letters to Mr. Trumbull show his later epistolary vivacity and humor:

MY DEAR BOY,

Just after I dropped my lesson into the fire-box came your letter asking me to put in more paragraphs. I will. Next time. As Bill Nye says about the ship that went down in October; "We did not hear about it until the following spring; and then it was too late."

What a son of your father you are! Your birth-right is his great big Loving Heart. It was tender as a woman's, and as strong as a gladiator's. I think the reason why he loved helpless and weak people so much was just because he could help them. You have his way of saying encouraging things in just the right way, at just the right time, and to the very right man. It is a splendid endowment, to have the right kind of a father isn't it? And somehow, you know, I kinda, sorto give the Boy a little credit for some of it? I think the father does, too.

The *Sunday School Times* also published his volume of verses, "The Silver Trumpets", of which he tells in this letter:

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PASADENA, July 4th.

MY DEAR FRIEND TRUMBULL:

Just see how I kept the "Fourth" safe and sane! Mrs. Burdette and I sent all the servants away; disconnected the telephone, muffled the door bell, lunched on bread and butter and supped on bread and milk—and lo, a whole, long, blessed day without an interruption—a day of work. That was the kind of a day they had in the garden of Eden—a day of work from sunrise to sunset.

The first "interruption" caused the fall of man.

From that day to this, it has been the same way. Work is a joy; a blessing; it prolongs life, preserves the health, keeps the teeth white, and inclines the hair to curl. It's the "interruptions" of life that are the inventions of the evil one.

Well; I send you the results of a quiet day.

You must know, these poems—I have to call them something—were written as a Christmas present to Mrs. Burdette. "What shall I give you this Christmas?" I asked her. I have to ask my friends what they want, because my brain is very narrow and shallow. For many years I have bought hat-pins for women and base balls for men—I can think of no greater variety of Christmas remembrances. My Lady said she wanted a poem on the first page of the Temple Herald (our church calendar) every Sunday throughout the year. And here they are, 52—fifty-two—count them—fifty-two—52.

They were written as preludes to the morning sermons, being based upon the text thereof. Each one of them was accompanied by an illustration—a picture I found somewhere that fitted the subject, and you may note traces here and there of a slightly veiled allusion to some pictorial illustration.

Anyhow; here they are. I have called the collection by forty-two different titles, and out of the forty-two I have selected for the name—"The Silver Trumpets."

I think now any of the other thirty-nine are better than this one. But I can't guess which one is better than all the thirty-eight. Ah me! A baby's troubles begin with its name. But, like many good people, I wanted a Bible name for my baby, so when I read in Numbers 10, 2: "Make thee two trumpets of silver—that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly and for the journeying of the camps," I bethought

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me that these little blasts or flourishes on my little tin trumpet set the Assembly at our great Temple in the order of worship, and gave the signal for the journey of the week. Hence the final selection of a name. What a long explanation for a little name for a small baby! I will embody it in the "Foreword". It must have been a foreword, mustn't it?

Well, take the baby and dandle it; guess how much it weighs? Who does it look like? I have had great happiness in the birning of the Fiftytwoplets. I would like to see the darling in a pretty dress—I am no Quaker—but not a hobble, please. I would like the copyright in my own name—that's Daddy's carnal pride.

Cordially yours,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

When the copy for his *Sunday School Times* articles with reference to the war were being prepared for publication, some editing was done in the office that called forth a letter from Mr. Burdette in which he said:

All my life I have pushed the "Lights" to the front in my work, and have used the "Shadows" merely as backgrounds to emphasize the light, and I don't know that I can keep up a pathetic series of chapters. Dear Man, I have to preach short sermons and make short prayers, lest my heart should break into laughter and scandalize a congregation which may not realize what a joyous thing religion is to me.

And when the series was ready for publication, he sent this note:

As to the title for the entire series—well, you know what Gen. Sherman said war was? Or, rather, is? Well, "Through Hell to Heaven"—that is coming home, is the most striking title I can think of. If your blessed old Cromwellian father were in command, I could see him shake his head with a forgiving smile on his face. But I've picked out something else, not quite so harsh. So our ship is christened with a bottle of ink, and you may knock away the stays and launch her when you please.

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He did occasional work for the *Ladies Home Journal*, whose editor, Mr. Edward W. Bok, he had known well in Pennsylvania days. Writing to him toward the close of his life work he said:

And you don't know how delighted I am to get back to the magazine. At my age one should be past such a feeling, but I was as proud and happy when you accepted "One Chair in My Pulpit" as I was ages ago when you printed the first number of "From a New Ink Stand". Just as proud, and that new ink stand spilled its first quill full across the pages of the *Journal* away back in the early 90's, when you were up at old 435 Arch Street. What ancient history!

After months of suffering, a physician administered to him who gave him relief and quickly health began to be restored.

With his physical recovery, his mentality became alert and active and in its old form, as shown by a talk he gave December 6, 1909, before the Church Federation meeting held in Temple Auditorium, on "Church Unity", which carried so much of his philosophy. He said in part:

We have been talking about church union for years. And the great opposition to it has largely come from little fellows who, because they can't swim, are afraid they will be swallowed out of sight in the great ocean of Christian union and harmony. They need not be afraid. They'll float. No matter if the churches come together in a maelstrom, the apples and corks will go bobbing around on the surface, down in the deepest hollows and capping the stormiest crests of the shouting billows.

There are some people who never quite rejoice with the rest of us because they are too heavy to fly and too light to sink. So they never know the ecstasy of the upper ether, between the earth and the stars, nor the profound depths into which the soul goes down sometimes, to find itself alone with God.

The union of the churches? The unity of the Spirit? The unity of the faith? Are we waiting for it? I'm sorry for the

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man who is. Are we ready for it? I'm just as sorry for the man who isn't. They're both out of place and time.

Do we wait, then, while we pray and hope for the unity of the church in the spirit of Jesus Christ, our one Lord? Why, men and brethren, it's here! What do I care for the denominational badge on the collar of a man's coat, when finding me sore beset by those robbers, pain and poverty, and sickness, and he stops, after ordained priest and consecrated Levite have gone by, to pour oil into my smarting wounds, wrap his own cloak about me, wind his arms around me to lift me up, while he says to the commercialism of the world, "Take care, good care of him; I'll pay you." Unity of the churches? I don't care for the name. I bless God for the fact.

Though his health improved so that in January of 1910 he was able to take a trip to Honolulu, where he remained for some months under the beneficial conditions there, and continued his trip to Japan and China, there was never any time after this when he felt for one moment he could have carried the burdens of Temple Baptist Church or of any continuous work.

After his return to California in the summer of 1910, he occasionally preached in the pulpits of the Presbyterian church of Pasadena, the Congregational Church of Los Angeles, the Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles, the various Baptist churches and supplied a summer in the Temple Baptist Church, but was unequal to any heavier demands.

But that he did make an occasional address, is shown by the record that at a Memorial Service for the Titanic's dead, Mr. Burdette speaking for "The Army" paid this tribute to Archibald Butt:

So this Soldier, being in the place of the Sacrifice, represented the army in its best and noblest service. His sword was sheathed; his arms were strong with gentleness. The more fragile the life in peril, the more tenderly was it guarded.

MR. BURDETTE AND A GROUP OF THE FRIENDS HE MADE IN HONOLULU, HAWAII



THE CLOSING YEARS

Who shall measure what God has purchased at the price of this soldier's life?

Whether it bought much or little, or nothing, the Sacrifice never questioned. To the soldier, the path of duty lay before him, plain as the stars in heaven above him. It was not one of two things which he might do—it was the one supreme thing which he must do. "Noblesse oblige."

In the camera of the darkness of that April morning love caught and forever holds for us a picture of the man who stood for the American army in that hour of fear and death.

We see him standing with his hand on the shoulder of a friend. His was a loving nature—a friend till death. He looked after the departing boats with longing glances, as a man who looked at heaven with level eyes and saw God in the faces of his friends. From the doomed wreck he looked down at the scattered squadron of lifeboats. Some of them weakly rowed by sobbing women—women with husbands, sons, lovers on the ship of death.

They were but a little way off. There was yet time for a leap to life and safety. The ship careened to its last plunge down into the black dungeons of its pitiless enemy, the sea. The soldier glanced around the scattered lifeboats as the adjutant glances along the line of glittering bayonets in the quiet hour of the evening parade. They are all there—the weak, the helpless, the women, and the children. The soldier turned and faced his Great Commander, saluted and reported:

"Sir, the parade is formed!"

"To your post!"

And with the old soldierly bearing and the firm, martial tread, he passed through the portals of darkness into the land of glory, to take his place among the immortals who have died for men. And the smile that lingered to the last of earth upon his face carried its sunshine into the sea.

In 1912 a trip was planned to Europe for the benefit of my health, and in May we left New York for Europe, intending to have a brief automobile trip through England, going to Paris and Bad Nauheim. As this trip was on account of my health, we found before

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reaching London that it would be better to go to Bad Nauheim at once. We landed at Cherbourg, going up to Paris and thence to Bad Nauheim, where we both took the baths, which Mr. Burdette declared on his part were entirely for my benefit.

In a letter to his sister Jo, written from Bad Nauheim, he says:

It is not an exciting life but it fills up the time. When we are not dressing for something we are undressing because we have just had it. We wear our clothes out in the dressing room before we have a chance to show them on the street.

We celebrated my birthday—Number 68, count them—by spending the day in a place that again would have interested Gus mightily. It is the oldest Roman camp in the world—the only one that has ever been wholly restored and reconstructed along the lines of its old ruins. The Kaiser had this work done. It was a camp for permanent occupation, splendidly fortified, with fine buildings for the quarters of the officers and soldiers, and for the offices of the civil administration. The museums are rich in the relics of weapons, jewelry and utensils of all sorts that have been dug up here. It was made here when the Romans were trying to extend and hold their empire over the Germans, away back when, as we learned at school, “*Omnia Gallia in tres partes divisa*” wast.

The ancient batteries of catapults and machines for throwing huge javelins are reconstructed, giving the camp a singularly and most impressive sense of reality. It would not have surprised me much if a helmeted Roman sentinel had halted me with a “*Quo Vadis?*” If he had I would have said, “Oh—ho? You are one of the beggars who arranged that ‘twenty-six prepositions shall be followed by the accusative?’ You are the pelican I’ve been laying for.”

And I would have had one round with him anyhow just to avenge my bitter boyhood on Andrews and Stoddard’s Latin Grammar.

We were in Europe with two friends, Dr. and Mrs. Merrifield, when his 68th birthday was celebrated at



ROBERT J. BURDETTE WITH MR. KENNEDY OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
AND MR. K. ITO, PROPRIETOR OF THE MANCHURIAN DAILY
NEWS AT DAIREN

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Bad Nauheim, and Dr. Merrifield wrote him this appreciation:

You are 68 "years young" to-day—the youngest oldster I have ever known. I little dreamed, back on the Vermont farm forty years or more ago—when I first came to admire you through your *Hawkeye* articles, copied each week into the Vermont *Phoenix* and so brought regularly to our home and hearts—that I should ever be privileged to be numbered among your personal friends. But so it is; and to-day I bring to you my heart's homage, grateful that the pen which charmed at morn still charms at eve. Did your countless hosts of admirers, scattered all over the American Continent, know that to-day is the 68th anniversary of the birth of genial "Bob" Burdette, who has delighted millions of hearts with his kindly humor and never wounded one, they would join with me in heartfelt greetings and in the expressed hope that the pen and tongue which have charmed a continent for forty years may retain undiminished their magic power for many years to come.

With affectionate admiration and "many happy returns", may I claim the high privilege of subscribing myself

Your friend,

WEBSTER MERRIFIELD.

Not receiving all the benefit I had hoped, we later went to Switzerland and from there to Baden Baden where I was definitely improved in health. Mr. Burdette at this time, seemingly so well, had devoted himself to the pleasure of the place and writing rather than taking the baths. On our way home, before reaching New York, it became apparent that he was not as well as he had thought, and my regret was often expressed that he had not joined me in the cure at Baden Baden.

His strength was not sufficient for the abundant tasks he had been able to perform in all the years of his active life up to that time. On many days it was not possible for him to leave the home, and he found,

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apparently, consolation in his diary, which was more faithfully kept in the time following the beginning of his illness than at any other previous time in his life. There are entries early in 1913 that indicate the beginning of the break in his health. On February 13th of that year there is an entry:

R. (as he designates himself) is very weak today, and suffering much from his intestinal derangement. He ate no supper and went to bed at curfew.

And on the following morning:

R. got up feeling very weak, and when he tried to work, only puttered.

These were, however, occasional evidences of the onset of disease, and there were intermittent periods of strength and the old ability to work, for on Sunday, February 23d, he preached from his old pulpit in the "Temple", before an overflowing congregation, more than five hundred persons being turned away.

From that time on he worked less and he began more and more to realize he was an invalid, and though he occasionally did public work, it was with great expenditure of effort.

On Sunday, March 2, 1913, he preached again in the Pasadena Presbyterian Church, the first pulpit he occupied after entering the active ministry. His sermon was on "Infinite Love" and made a deep impression, as it seemed he was reciting his testing experience. This was the last time he preached in the church and his diary indicated that he preached to "standing room". But he says further, "I was not at all well and my voice was weak but I pulled through all right. This is the last sermon this month."

He attended the 25th Anniversary dinner of the

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Pasadena Board of Trade in April, as one of the guest of honor and speakers, and observes that—

He got along very well, but he sure was tired and weak, and it was a pull up hill through the sand all the way.

He very much enjoyed his companionship with Henry Van Dyke, who visited Sunnycrest that winter, and he notes with pleasure the attendance upon delightful dinners given in Dr. Van Dyke's honor.

Daily life became for him less active, his preaching and lecturing more occasional, the afternoon "siesta" an institution, the hours of his morning work shorter, and reading and music the greatest of his delights. "Curfew", as he always indicated his bed time, was early, and sleep came to be wooed with greater difficulty. An entry in his diary in March reads:

R. feels miserable these days 24 hours a day.

Later in March there is this entry:

Saw Dr. who put me on rigid regimen and sentenced me to bed for three days.

He maintained, however, his interest in civic and public affairs, and in referring to a municipal election in April, and the defeat of a candidate, he says:

7000 persons registered who did not vote. Do you suppose I would have been defeated by 100 votes with 7000 lying around to be picked up? That is not the kind of politics I was trained up in. It is all right for the office to seek the man, but I observe that it usually seeks the man who chases it into a corner and throttles it into accepting him.

In May he was so far improved that he lectured at Reno, and delivered the baccalaureate sermon at the University of Nevada on "Under Sealed Orders". All of his old eloquence and power of expression were in evi-

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dence, but in addition there seemed a quality more accentuated than ever before, the fervor of a man delivering a message under Divine guidance.

Returning by the way of San Francisco he gave the baccalaureate sermon for Stanford University, May 18th, and on May 30th, he preached the Memorial Day sermon to the Grand Army of the Republic, at Temple Auditorium, Los Angeles. June 8th, he gave a sermon before the religious associations of the University of Redlands, on "Beauty and Strength".

In June, 1889, he preached his first baccalaureate sermon before the Class of '89, at the State Normal School, West Chester, Pa.—so almost a quarter of a century had intervened between the first and the last, when on June 12, 1913, he gave his last public utterance, which was a commencement address before three hundred graduates of the University of Southern California, on "God's Country". Following this, we went for a trip to the Yosemite, which filled several weeks of the early summer and gave him great pleasure. This was destined to be his last long trip away from Pasadena.

In July, his diary notes that "his stomach is 'revolutionary' again".

Upon our return from Yosemite, we went to our summer cottage at Clifton-by-the-Sea, where he spent the days of more or less invalidism writing to his friends, and occasionally contributing to the magazines and papers. In a letter to a friend, he writes:

We are running on the usual schedule down at Eventide. I have lost my batting streak and my weight has dwindled to 127. I have placed myself in the hands of Dr. Millspaugh, of Los Angeles, who is recommended to me as a leading specialist in stomach troubles, and he certainly is finding out all about me. I am as weak as water, but I strongly hope that I will soon strike the upgrade again.

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Clara is buoyant and radiant and happy as a school girl, in spite of being burdened with a sick old husband. She gives most of her strength, all of her time and more of her thought to me. God bless her! These afternoon days would be all November but for her care.

The Pacific was always a delight to him, and a July notation reads:

The gulls have been unusually numerous all day, and the fishing has been fine for men and birds. Little steam and gasoline launches and fleets of row boats have dotted the blue sea, and many have been the broken circles of water which drew the screaming birds by scores and attracted the boats as well. All this told of a general banquet for everybody save the guests of honor, for the big fish were feeding on the little fish below, driving them to the surface for the gulls, who passed what they could not catch back to the big fish, and the fishermen came with nets and lines that gathered in everything but the gulls, so everybody was happy but the little fish, as usual.

On his 69th birthday he wrote:

Every year of the 69 came along and laid its long forgotten burdens on my old back. Nevertheless I had a good time. The day was beautiful, and love came under the years and lifted them as lightly as the sunlight carries a cloud. Violet gave all the day to amusing and cheering her husband. A little music, a little reading, a great deal of talking, some hand in hand dreaming, and the day was golden with promise and sweet with its tenderness.

In August his illness grew for a time more acute, and the possibility of a surgical operation was discussed with his physician. To this, however, he objected, as there was no positive assurance of definite result. In August he notes:

As the Chautauqua management continues to announce my coming lectures, I sent notices this morning to the *Times*, *Herald* and *Tribune* that my engagements have all been cancelled.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

To James B. Weaver of Des Moines, Iowa, a son of the distinguished Iowa pioneer, who was a close friend of Burdette in the early days, he wrote in expressing his inability to attend a home coming meeting of the former Iowans who had achieved distinction, to be guests of the Iowa Press and Authors Club:

I wish I could come home with you boys next October. How I would enjoy myself with the men I loved and played with when hate was a thing as strange as murder. Sometimes we did play with hard gloves, but as I remember, the fellow who got knocked down never got knocked out. He fought just as hard on his back as on his feet. Harder, in fact, because when he was down he fought with his head, hands, feet, claws and teeth. Now I am old and I cannot even fight with a tomahawk, and I don't want to.

On another occasion, writing his friend Strickland Gillilan, who had sent him a message of cheer on the occasion of Riley's birthday, when some choice spirits had foregathered, he said:

I do want you boys to know how greatly I appreciate the good things you said about me when you foregathered on Jim's birthday. To think that kid is only 60. He has yet ten years of good work left in his bones.

And in the same letter, referring to his gathering together of the fugitive sketches and poems from newspaper files into scrap books, he wrote:

My scrap book stuff, my own output, is piled up in my den like bound files of newspapers. Sometimes, as I run over a few pages of it, I would give several dollars and twenty-five cents to know what I meant by it, and some of it, well, I would really admire it if any other fellow had written it.

His letters were filled with observations wrought out of his experience, and showing his philosophical understanding of life, for instance this sentence:

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There are so many things in this world and this life we cannot understand that it is a good thing we shall have all eternity in which to study some of the things which the summer schools of philosophy find out all about during the dog days.

And to his friend McManus he harked back across the years when he wrote:

Oh, McManus! What an awful big old wilderness of a world it is. Who is the fool that thinks it is so little? Seas and rivers and prairies and mountains stretching out a million miles between friends who ought to be side-fence neighbors. I hope Heaven is a nice little place, not much bigger than Howe, where we can all be close together.

Writing to his old friend, "Doc" Worthington, he said:

I don't mind growing old. That I always looked forward to with a certain pleasure, but I don't like being sick. I love to see my friends—but a crowd of people tires the heart out of me. I have ceased to preach and lecture—pulpit and platform days have gone by. But I still write a little every week. Well; I have had a good time all my life. Everything has come my way. I have had more friends at every turn than I could ever count. My dreams have nearly all come true. I have laughed a hundred times where I cried once. And I have no complaint to make of life or this world. It's a beautiful world and a good one. But there is one far more beautiful and infinitely better. That is one of the things I know most positively, most certainly. The God who made this world could easily make a better one.

Good-bye, Doc. Dear friend and loyal comrade, my memory runs back very lovingly to the days when we were school boys in the old "Peoria High". And when I lay down the pen I will dream of them for a happy hour. God bless you, and all who are dear to you.

And in the same letter, in referring to the beginnings of the illness from which eventually he died, he said:

I am not an invalid yet. I am not bed-ridden, nor yet housebound, but I am weak and the pen and the machine too,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

for that matter has grown to be a grievous burden to me. The medicine men name my complaint "Chronic Pancreatitis", and it is coming to closer grips with me day by day. They did think very seriously of sending me down to Baltimore to have the great surgeon at Johns Hopkins take me apart and see what made me act that way, but I am past 69, and there was some question as to their getting the old man back together again without losing some of the pieces.

Short motor trips were taken, but they were not always possible, for he notes the striking of "joy rides from the docket, because the best road to Long Beach is a succession of comminuted fractures".

He enjoyed brief visits from close friends. There are many references to his friend, Norman Bridge of Los Angeles, in whose stimulating companionship he took great delight.

He took much enjoyment in the company of his little granddaughter, Clara, and says:

It is a good thing for us to have young life come in now and then and dynamite us out of the ruts.

Before he, himself, had reached middle life, he wrote this bit of sweet philosophy:

"But," you say, "cannot one be young-hearted after forty?" Yea, beloved, after sixty or seventy. Down to the days of whitehaired old age the heart may glow with tenderness, and the quiet warmth of the June sunshine of years ago stored in its chambers as years ago the sun stored his heat and light away in the forests of the earth, to dance and gleam and glow again in merry flames and summer warmth upon the coal-fed hearths to-day.

For this reason, oh, my young readers, rejoice in the days of your youth, when the light is sweet and it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun; let your hearts cheer for you in these days of sunshine and nights of starlight, and "remove anger from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh," remembering "the days of darkness, for they shall be many!"

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And the firelight that will come to glow upon the hearth and dance in warmth and tenderness upon the walls of your heart's chambers in those days will be the light you are storing away now. Be happy and light-hearted, then; but be the house of your mirth as pure as a temple, and your laughter sinless as the songs of birds; in all your mirth and dancing, exalt Wisdom; and, indeed she shall bring thee to honor, and give to thine head an ornament of grace; then shall the years of thy life be many and thy heart be ever young.

In September there was a consultation of physicians, and of one of the consultants he says:

He asked a Gatling gun series of questions that began with July 30, 1844, at Greensboro, Pa., and came down smoothly to September 6, 1913, Los Angeles, without a break or a jar.

Again in September he notes that—

"bed is one of the nicest places in the world to sleep in. It is the worst place in the world to lie awake."

Much he enjoyed a visit from his son Robin in the fall, and he notes:

Robin sat at the piano and played for an hour in his sweet old way, a pot pourri of all the old and some of the new tunes, all woven together in Robin's own fashion. Hour after hour he plays, his soul absorbed in his music, and life a vision for him. I will hear him so long as I live, and I will catch echoes of his music in the chorus of heaven.

And on his son's departure:

We all knelt together in the sun room and read from Acts 21, the parting on the shore at Tyre, then a little prayer, and Violet took him to Los Angeles, for it is better that I should not go, and my last memory of him is very sweet in beautiful, peaceful Eventide. "And we kneeled down on the shore and prayed, and when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship, and they returned home again." (Acts 21 : 6, 7.)

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

He had a Scriptural quotation to fit almost every occasion. Upon the return from Eventide to Pasadena his chauffeur was arrested for running over a dog, and in noting the \$10 fine subsequently imposed, he says:

About one dollar for running over it and nine dollars for running away without stopping. “Agree with thine adversary quickly whilst thou art in the way with him.”

On Monday, October 20th, he says:

I compiled a little of my Philosophy of Life for the *Times*, but the burden soon became too heavy and I laid it down and lay down beside it.

But work grew occasionally and he observes that—“He must return to do a little long neglected grinding at his dusty mill.”

Here, in the afternoon of the days, and in the afternoon time of life, he wrote his “Little Philosophy of Life”, which seemed to be the sum total of all life had meant for him. It was published in December, 1913, and was dedicated to his little granddaughter, Clara Bradley Wheeler, with this beautiful dedication:

To My Little Granddaughter

CLARA BRADLEY WHEELER

Who, with tottering baby steps, is coming in to the entrance of the Stage of Life, just as her Grandfather, with footsteps equally uncertain, is slowly passing out at its Exit. The baby, doubtless wondering much that the World should be so immeasurably large. He certainly, marvelling, as he looks back, that a Stage so small and circumscribed could hold so many people. She looks at her Grandfather with the Wonder-Wisdom in the baby eyes, but she does not know what he is thinking, nor how much he knows.

And he, looking at the Little One with the meditative inquiry of Old Age, knows just as little what she is thinking, just as little how much she knows. For a handful of days only



"PAPA" BURDETTE AND CLARA

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have they known one another, each speaking a language strange and incomprehensible to the other. But the two hearts, one old as the ashes of last year's camp fires, the other young and fragrant as the roses of this June morning, have knitted themselves together with a love that will outlive Time. This is one of the Beautiful Mysteries of Life. "And the Evening and the Morning are another Day."

No more beautiful review of this booklet was made than that written by Dr. Robert R. Meredith:

I have just laid down "A Little Philosophy of Life", after reading it for the *third* time. To me it is most charming and refreshing. There is nothing "little" about it but its size; and bulk is not beauty, nor is bigness greatness. It is a true philosophy—cheerful and cheering, warm and radiant with love, grounded in truth and faith, and inspiring spirit-stirring hopes. It carries a message of good cheer that this weary world greatly needs to hear. May the Lord put his blessing upon it, and give it wings. It certainly has done me immense good. I hope to be a better man for the reading of it.

A companion of this little book was compiled the following Easter under the title of "Alpha and Omega" and dedicated to his other little granddaughter, Caroline Virginia Burdette:

To my Little Granddaughter

CAROLINE VIRGINIA BURDETTE

A Loving Easter Greeting:

To a Tiny Bud of Human Immortality

A Little Life that please God

Will unfold its tender leaves into

Fragrant petals of Beautiful Girlhood

Perfumed Fruitage of Gracious Womanhood

All the Way of Her Pilgrimage may

Hope run singing before her

Faith walk praying beside her

And God's twin angels, Mercy and Peace

Follow close after her.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

In October, just at leaving Eventide, there is this plaintive entry:

I have been a daily care. I wish the dear Lord would make me well or take me home.

And again:

We are sorry to leave Eventide—we are glad to get back to Sunnycrest. I reckon that is the way people feel about leaving this world to go to Heaven.

On November 1st there is this entry:

I worked on my war sketches. Got rather tired. War has been over so long.

His love of flowers was indicated many times by his vivid descriptions of the flora of Pasadena grounds and gardens, as observed by him in his latter days.

His physical condition was such that it was evident his health was permanently broken, but his long expressed desire to round out his seventy years filled him with ambition and hope to linger, even in suffering, until after July 30, 1914. He talked of it as a boy would talk of some event that had been long promised him. He claimed it with the faith of a man who had proven the promises many times. He dreamed of it as one who would see all his hopes fulfilled, and beyond that he considered nothing except borrowed time that could never be repaid.

To his old friend, Col. Will Visscher, he wrote:

And you were with Stanley Waterloo at his last hour of foregathering at the club? Stanley Waterloo! I was a guest in his house ages ago, when he was on the St. Louis *Republic*, I think, and Eugene Field was on the *Journal*, and you were beginning a lifelong friendship with that little circle of good comrades.

What a world it was then! Morning time in the high

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Sierras, and the month of June, eternal June. The world created not from chaos, but moulded and welded out of aspirations, ambitions and purposes: Fortune on the prows and Pleasure at the helm—

“Book of beginnings, story without end,
Each maid a heroine, and each man a friend.”

And Stanley has hung “Thirty” on the hook. Who else was there alive so long ago? What has become of all the boys?

An illustrated story of his life and work in the *Times*, early in November gave him pleasure, and he notes:

Reading Henry Warnack's story of “Daddy” exuberantly illustrated.

Many are the half-philosophical, half-poetical allusions in his diary. On Tuesday, November 11th, this:

Morning comes gray like a day born old, and I am old with it, tired and weak and racked with pain. Tired me to read, or to talk or to listen, so I didn't do anything.

But a few days later he sees the other side of the picture, when he says:

Snow white clouds done in heaps and drifts over the bluest of skies, with golden sunshine streaming through at every opening, and a breeze pure and clear and bracing—that is the kind of a morning that lifts its face of benediction upon the world today, and I am better.

And in making a notation, evidently altogether for himself, in his diary, as to a benefaction made by him to an individual in need, he says:

I also mailed article to the L. H. J. When I get a check for that somebody else will be waiting for it. I do try to keep my left hand from knowing what my right hand does, but I think the beggar makes some mighty good guesses.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

His days were now alternately "good and bad", as he notes them in his diary, and on every good day there is a return, evident from his written expressions, to much of his old buoyance and joyousness, while the bad days are evidenced by a patient uncomplaining resignation.

A romantic picture might be presented of the period between his first wedding ceremony, which was a typical California wedding at the old Horse Shoe Ranch, the Rose property in Alhambra, and the last wedding ceremony he performed, which was that of Lieutenant Henry Norman Jensen and Echo Allen of Pasadena Avenue, Los Angeles. Between these two were many similar occasions but of infinite variety. The list would have been greater but for his refusal to marry those who had been divorced, his belief being that if the church, through its ministers, would emphasize the fact that there is a reason why they could not be re-married with the sanction of the church, marriage would not be so lightly entered into, the divorce evil be decreased and the sanctity of the home held more sacred.

Referring to this wedding in his diary, under date of November 17, 1913, he said:

A charming wedding it was, but when I awoke with a temperature of 100 degrees, it looked as though some other preacher would get my job, but I rallied, and we all got along very nicely. It was one of the happiest wedding breakfasts I ever attended, and I had two dishes of home-made chocolate ice cream—two! That is something to be remembered. I came home and went to bed at once, and did not get out of it for 19 hours. No more weddings, unless I want to couple one with my own funeral.

And on the following day he notes:

How it did rain! I am glad Echo Allen was married yesterday.

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He attended the theatre occasionally, but of a modern play he said:

Once is enough. I am afraid modern comedy has lost its charm for me. Hereafter I will stick to the old things that have proved themselves, lo, these many years. Maybe, after all, the fault is not in the modern drama. It is hard for an old man to maintain a youthful mind.

Late in November he notes, "Bed is one of my favorite resorts".

Just before Christmas he "ran into Hatteras weather", as he expresses it in his diary, and on December 24th he notes:

I abandoned my Christmas train and left all my things blocking the main line and cluttering the sidings. I will send out what hasn't already been shipped or mailed next Christmas. I can do nothing more this year.

His diary for 1914, the last year of his life, was the most consistent and continuous he had ever kept, and is complete except for occasional breaks when his weakness was such that it was impossible for him to write at all.

In January, 1914, the trained nurse who had been a comfort to him five years before, came to care for him, and from that time on until November 19th, she gave him the most devoted care that a loving trained heart could bestow. I pay a tender tribute to Sara M. Dick, as I am sure he would, for her unselfish devotion, and as she has since passed on, I am sure he was glad to welcome her to the home of which they often talked.

On January 2, 1914, in a letter to a friend, he wrote:

In spite of my being sick, I was able to sit up and not make myself a damper on the day (New Year's Day) and if I was miserable I kept my misery to myself. We had a delightful Christmas and a delightful New Year.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

He saw clearly the approach of the end at the beginning of the year, for the entry of January 1st reads:

With mingling hope and trust and fear
I bid thee welcome untried year,
The paths before me pause to view—
Which shall I shun and which pursue?
I make no choice of left or right,
But walk straight forward in God's might,
So grant me grace my course to run,
This is my prayer—"Thy will be done."

The thought and conviction of heart and mind is that this year will end for me in one of the early Spring days. Some time in April or May, and that seems a long time ahead, I expect to close my pilgrimage. I am content. Had I chosen I had lived on to one more birthday, but God's way is best, and I accept it with good cheer and good content. The year is done under cloudy skies, but the heart is full of unchanging sunshine. Day by day I will do my work and set my house in order, and any day He calls, "whether at even or at midnight or at cock-crowing, or in the morning," I will be ready.

Pain and its accompanying nervousness kept from him the sleep that meant refreshment and restoration, and of the efforts to induce slumber on the part of his physicians and nurses, he says on January 3d:

No one else can give sleep. It is the gift of God anyhow. Weariness will not woo it. It may sometimes only frighten it. Drugs only bring on a ghastly imitation of it. Often a dangerous imitation. There is not a sleeping mixture in all the pharmacopeia that is not a dangerous poison. Only the sleep that God gives to "His Beloved" is healthful and refreshing. Give me that sleep tonight, dear Lord.

But with all of his pain and suffering he kept the sweetness and resignation that had marked him through his life. On January 5th he writes:

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I realize in these sleepless nights, racked with pain, how much I need this "Passive phase" of existence—this God-given condition of mere receptivity. Well, I am tired. I will lie down at any rate and pray for the great blessing of sleep. The four things which are not in Thy treasury, I lay before Thee Lord, with this petition—my nothingness, my wants, my sins and my contrition.

Half-seriously and half-humorously occasionally he refers to his condition, and always he was able to look the end fairly in the face without winking. On January 7th an entry in his diary reads:

Insomnia worries me a great deal. The Doctor issues a solemn warning—"go slow"—the fact is, if I go any slower I will stop altogether, and I think that is what I am doing, running down. I am "letting the old cat die", and it seems to be a mighty tough old cat, with all its nine lives yet intact. Death seems to have forgotten me.

And there is a flash of his never-failing fun on January 24th, when he wrote:

I breakfasted in bed. Then they took away the tray and I lay there with my head crookedly propped up on the higher corner of a pillow set drunkenly on one end corner-wise, my chin doubled down into my chest, drifting away into delicious sleep. R. came along, lifted my head, took away the extra crooked pillow, smoothed down the remaining one most comfortably, drew me down in the bed, straightened me out, tucked in the covers and said, "There, now you can go to sleep", and being quite wide awake, I got up and dressed. I am getting tired of living merely as a breathing machine.

And again January 29th:

The —'s called in the afternoon. Stanley met them at the door, and Heavens! What the pagan sputtered at them! We did not learn until long after they had gone that they had been here. In addition to speaking only Japanese, Stanley is tongue-tied and stammers. It is rather difficult to translate it into English.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

Whenever it was possible, however, he was at his desk, seeking to the last to grind what grist was in the mill. On the last day of January he says:

In spite of several invitations to drive this morning, I remained in the den and got rid of some work that has been nagging me for ten days. For 45 years it has been my habit to work in the morning and recreate in the afternoon, and I cannot suddenly change the habits of a life time, so the morning sees me chained to the laboring oar at the desk, and so it will be until the oar is broken.

The Sabbath, which through all of his life he had consecrated apart from the rest of the week, gave him joy. There is an entry February 1st:

Such a beautiful day it has been, sunny, soft, balmy, fragrant with woodsy odors—a very Sabbath of God indeed.

The day is ended ere I sink to sleep
My weary spirit seeks repose in Thine,
Father forgive my trespasses and keep
This little life of mine
At peace with all the world, dear Lord, and Thee.
No fear my soul's unwavering faith can shake,
All's well—whichever side the grave for me
The morning light may break.

And his eagerness to finish what work was still before him is reflected in his diary for February 2d, when he says:

I felt a great deal better this morning. Worked on the war book all morning, but I could not work fast, and had to pause many times for rest. If I could just have one long, exultant, vigorous day, even of a year ago.

The “war book” referred to was his last sustained literary work, which was the preparation of his volume of “Drums of the 47th”, a series of chapters published originally in the *Sunday School Times*, dealing with

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incidents and events of his service as a soldier in the Civil War.

The book, "Drums of the 47th," was issued in November, 1914, only a few days before his death, when he was so ill he could only see the outlines of the illustration on the paper cover of the book. He commented on it in detail, and closing his eyes, said, "Violet, this is my last gift to you". But it was not until after he had passed, I found put away in a place where he knew I would discover it, a copy of his poems, "The Silver Trumpets", in which he had pasted on one fly leaf my favorite photograph of himself, and had illustrated each poem by some print or kodak picture which he had carefully selected, knowing that this was to bear a special message to me after he had gone. The book was carefully tied between two pieces of paste board, bound with a white ribbon, and inscribed "Violet's Trumpets". Pasted on the leaf opposite his photograph was an appreciation, which will ever live in my heart, as I am sure he hoped it would. This was written in a firm, clear hand, showing that the thought of this book had come to him and been carried out while he was yet strong and well, for the lover heart of him was still strong in the desire that though he had gone from me, his message would surprisingly comfort me:

TO THE
DEAREST AND SWEETEST AND BEST

"His Banner Over Me is Love."

Pure as the Lily-bell—whiter than snow;
Heart of a red Rose in the Morning Glow;
Flame of the Opal, Splendor of the Noon,
At Sunset sweeter than a Dream of June
In Twilight soft as breast of brooding Dove
The Bridal shadings of a Perfect Love.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

All Night a silvery Oriflamme of Stars,
Waving at dewy Morning's golden bars.
In all its jewelled changes—Love the same—
Glory of Sun and Sable—Rose and Flame.
We twain have walked along our Pilgrim Way
Neath skies of sheen and shadow—gold and gray;
Heart-locked to loving Heart—Hand-fast in Hand,
Through Life Paths Love-lit to a Love-crowned Land.
Clouds and the Sun-gleams blessings from above—
Always “His Banner Over Us is Love”.

Another reflection of the spirit of the Sabbath is in the entry for Sunday, February 15th:

All days are much alike to a sick, weak, almost good for nothing old man, yet Sunday is Sunday. It has the Sabbath atmosphere, the day of rest. It is God's own day, therefore man's best and pleasantest day. A day for quiet communion with our dear Heavenly Father and our loving Elder Brother. So little time those busy week-day lives leave for them. The day has been wondrously pleasant. My talk with Roy, especially the part of it on religious and spiritual matters, was especially gratifying to me.

And on the 17th he wrote:

A pleasant day. Closing in pleasantly. A day in which happiness found us without putting us to the trouble of looking for her.

And his familiarity with the scenes of first Christianity, and his delight in weaving his knowledge into comparisons, is shown on February 18th, when this entry appears:

Hard rain all day and night. These are the “latter rains”. In old Palestine, the land of promise, fall the “early rains” in October and November, quickening the seed sown, preparing the summer baked ground for the fall plowing. Then come the “winter rains” in November and December, stimulating the growth and life of the growing harvests, and then the “latter rains” in March and April, refreshing the maturing

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harvests, and renewing life and renewed strength to them, and this is exactly the function of our California rains in their divinely appointed season.

And when the storm was over, February 22d, he made this note:

Last evening's rainbow was a true and hopeful prophet and this morning a cloudless sky greeted the clear sunrise with joy and laughter. This land of California can cry harder, stop more quickly, and laugh more happily and whole-heartedly than any other country under the sun.

Occasionally his physical condition was improved, and there was a revival of the old spirit, for on February 25th he wrote:

Lent begins joyously and beautifully. A lovely day in the heavens, on the mountains and hills, meadows and gardens, and on the ocean. Everybody happy, and I go to the den to begin hard work on my Easter book, and I feel just like it.

Latter February found him again at Eventide. On the 26th there is this entry:

Left Sunnycrest at 9.15, running right through Los Angeles without stopping, and in a sunny run of one hour and forty-five minutes, anchored at Eventide. A little restlessness worried my sleep till midnight, after that sweet sleep and beautiful night.

And the following day:

Violet and the nurse were busy about the house all morning, unpacking, cleaning, dusting, cooking. It is not very much rest for them, even though it is considerable change. It is the way of womankind to make sacrifices for some one else, usually a sick, or oftener a lazy man, who selfishly accepts their sacrifices. Worked all morning and finished the Easter book, "Alpha and Omega" for the hands of the printer by noon. The task had to be done by hand and pen, and left me very much exhausted.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

As was ever the case, the change to the sea lifted up his spirit. February 28th he wrote:

Had a little nap before supper. Violet read to me before the driftwood fire in the drawing room, and I went to bed for a good long night's sleep at 8.30, and I got what I went for. Thanks to good careful nursing and the loving care of my dear wife, I am better, lots better, stronger, almost no pain, better stomach, better every way, and still growing better. Hurrah!

His sense of humor was still keen, and he makes this note concerning the departure of an employee from Sunnycrest on March 7th:

Gardener leaves us today. When he came here 18 months ago he was a sheep herder who did not know how to fasten a hose to a faucet, and could only tell a garden from a chapparal ranch by the fencing. Now he is a professional "gardener" and goes forth to spoil some man's grounds at expert's wages.

There are also many of the philosophical reflections that marked all of his work, tempered and mellowed with the added years. On March 24th he writes:

There is no property on earth more precious than castles in the air. They are so cheap and easy to build. Your own good thoughts, pleasant thoughts, kind thoughts, sweet and pure, are the only materials. You may build where you will and as high as you please and grandly as you please. The expense is all in the up-keep. A moment of hate lays them in ruins. A burst of passion lays low the proudest Chateau d'Espagne. A mean thought, an hour of jealousy, of selfishness, destroys the pleasant palace of a beautiful day dream. Every day the castle must be strengthened, repaired, beautified. That takes work, care, watchfulness. So long as the castle stands, it is real as Gibraltar.

Much he enjoyed the occasional visits from his old friends when his strength was sufficient to permit them. He makes this note on April 2d, referring to the late Senator George F. Edmunds of Vermont:

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Senator Edmunds called. He brought for me a book long out of print, "Yu-pe-ya's Lute", a translation of a Chinese poem. He read a few pages to me, in that singularly rich voice, the old sympathetic voice that was heard in the United States Senate in 1866. He was born February 1, 1828, now 86 years old, with yet a keen, living interest in contemporary life.

His interest in public affairs, notwithstanding his impaired health, did not abate, and his comments were seasoned with his usual humor. On April 3d his diary shows this entry:

Morning dawns with news from Mexico that may be believed until the evening papers published at 11 A. M. contradict it. Villa, the brigand, has captured Torreon. He says so himself, but he is such a liar he may have been killed a week ago.

After a well-meant call from one who was not by nature gifted to give comfort or inspiration, he observes:

A well filled mind is better than a well stored library. Its information is ready for use at a thought. It is more than a reservoir. It is a living fountain. A renewing spring. What you remember is the only valuable part of what you read. I have read through thousands of books. I retain only scores. The emptier the mind, the leakier, the less a man knows, the harder he is to entertain. The well filled mind is company for itself. The empty one, like a baby's, has to be amused with tiresome nothings.

His patience and fortitude under all trials were unswerving, and he determined ever to meet the days with courage. On March 26th he says:

What I am going to see today will depend less upon what I look at than upon the eyes I see with, and the eyes are windows colored by my heart, my thoughts, my cloudy passions.

Easter Sunday, April 12th, was observed as his diary indicates:

I was not very well this morning, suffering from a keen touch of indigestion, but I lay down on one of the West porch

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cots, adjusted the telephone and listened to the morning service of the Presbyterian Church, hearing Pastor Freeman's sermon quite well. I got much better toward noon, and went to bed at 9 o'clock "feelin' fine".

To his son, on March 15th, he wrote:

Two paragraphs in a Salt Lake City letter of recent date pleased me and interested me immensely, running as they did along the line of my thoughts and my prayers. One of these was to the effect that you were going to lecture at Bethel Church on "A Reporter's Spiel", and the other still more, that you were going to preach for Reverend W. B. Stewart in Bethel Church. I know you have this power of expression and I am so glad that you are going to demonstrate it.

Enrich your vocabulary. Diversify your expression. Say things in the manner that will make old things sound new. Remember that hundreds and thousands of preachers have been preaching from the texts you will have to select for nearly two thousand years past. But they haven't used your words; nor your arrangement of phrases, nor your statement of ideas. These things you can make your own. God give you grace and tact and strength, my son.

Following a more serious recurrence of his illness, there is a penciled notation on Thursday, May 7th:

"Fergit what did." An empty day. Tonight closes 24 hours of oblivion. I don't remember what has happened today. I am writing this page tomorrow and trying to remember whether or no I was alive tomorrow or rather yesterday. If I was I don't remember anything about it, save the headache with which I awoke, and which continued with me all day.

On the following Sunday he expresses again a belief which he stated frequently in his work:

"Mother Day" in all the churches except a very few where the preachers had other topics apparently more important. With these I sympathize. The flattest failures I ever made in the pulpit or on the rostrum were when I spoke on a topic supplied by some one else. I not only love to sharpen my own

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sword, to make the prayer before the sermon, but I want to make the whole sermon or speech. One man may be blazing with enthusiasm over a subject that is a perfect fire extinguisher for me.

Amelioration of his acute condition made it possible for him to return to his beloved task of supervising the setting out of new shrubs and flowers, and he makes this comment on May 14th:

"The breath of flowers is sweeter in the air than in the hand", and what a fragrant country this is. Odor of orange blossoms and fruit, carnations and roses by thousands, and violets, blessing the air, with fragrant shrubs, rare blossoms and the common old-fashioned flowers—"sweet letters of the angel tone whose messages whisper themselves in one's very dreams".

Early June found him better both in mind and body. June 5th he notes that he was "feelin' fine". Because of his improved condition and at his solicitation, I kept a long standing engagement in the East, being absent about two weeks. For his comfort and entertainment I had a new motor car delivered to him, the morning of my leaving—which like a new toy absorbed his attention and lessened the loneliness.

He found comfort in a poem sent him by Fanny Crosby—"a little hymn of joy and consolation":

Oh, child of God wait patiently,
Tho dark thy way may be,
And let thy faith lean tenderly
On Him who cares for thee.
And tho the clouds hang dimly
Above the arch of night
Yet in the morning joy will come
And fill thy soul with light.

On June 8th he wrote:

It is pretty lonesome in the house with the "Mistress of the Manse" away. Now that sunny weather is here I am going

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down to Eventide for a day or two to while away a little of the loneliness. I am on the upgrade this week, and the outing will be good for me. Ma'ma will be away about three weeks, I reckon. She has been shut up with an invalid for a long time, and I was very insistent on her going away. It will be good for her to get out among women interested in the affairs that interest her.

This entry for June 19th is characteristic:

Miss Dick and I decided it would be a nice thing to take some photographs of pretty little nooks in the garden and illuminate Violet's letters with them, so we set out to find her camera, and found it on the way from Chicago to Ithaca. She took it with her.

In mid-July his illness returned in a more acute stage, as indicated by his entry of July 13th:

My mind was at peace and composed for sleep, but my breath was somewhat stertorous and broken, very much like the breath of age. However, merely to breathe freely does not mean to live. I do not like these over-frequent stoppages of breath. It is at the least confusing. Ah, well, the end cannot be far away. I will be ready, come when and how and where it may. Strange that men are not always ready for it.

And again on July 16th:

"We," which includes the entire household, packed "my" trunk, a job occupying about two hours, and bringing to light a great many things I never knew I had. We are getting ready to live at the dear old home of Eventide for three months until October, and my 70th birthday will fall in 14 days, and "the days of our years are three score years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be four score years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow for it is soon cut off and we fly away". I do not know. Do I care? With every fibre of my heart do I weep for the loved ones who will weep for me. Of all, the most for my darling wife, my Violet, but for myself, not a regret, much less a fear, not a shadow of dread. "I have fought the good fight. I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

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Through all the years of his writing, lecturing and preaching, he had indicated his unshaken belief that a man should live to the Biblical three score and ten years, and the firmness of that belief without question sustained him in the struggle for a life that should round out the headlands of seventy. In his diary for Thursday, July 30, 1914, he headlined the page with "Three score and ten" with bold letters in red ink. His physical condition, which he was accustomed to indicate by a brief word on each page of his diary, he notes as "Good", and there is a quotation from Longfellow at the top of the page:

The holiest of all holidays are those
Kept by ourselves in silence and apart,
The secret anniversaries of the heart.

The birthday list of messages, including letters from perhaps every state in the United States, from Canada, and cablegrams from Europe, were delightful to him, as indicating the love and friendship of the thousands to whom and for whom he had preached, lectured and written through a period of more than forty years. He spent part of the day at "Eventide", the summer home at Redondo Beach, on the shores of the Pacific, of which he said in his "Little Philosophy of Life":

Afternoon land is very pleasant in spite of broken health and increasing weakness. Every evening I sit in the sun-room and watch the sun creep down the western wall of the sky, sinking to its rest beyond the farther rim of the blue Pacific. I know what is over there, because I have journeyed in those lands, and can follow the sun as he fades out of sight and begins to illumine the Orient. There, just where he drops below the waves, rise the green shores of picturesque Japan. Yokohama, Tokyo, Nikko, snow-crowned Fujiyama, the beautiful Inland

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Sea—I can see them all. There where that silver star is shining through the crimson bars of the clouds, is China. Over there, where the clouds are white as snow banks—there is Manila. Yonder, where the black cloud is tipped with flame, is Port Arthur. I know them all. I have been there.

Well, beyond the gates of the sunset, farther away than the stars, away past the bars of the night, there is another land. I have never seen it. I have never seen anyone who has been there. But all that I know about the oriental lands in which I have journeyed is mere conjecture with my positive belief in that Blessed Land which eye hath not seen. That Fair and Happy Country I do know. Know it with a sublime assurance which is never shadowed by a cloud of passing doubt. I may become confused in my terrestrial geography. But this Heaven of ours—no man, no circumstance, can ever shake my faith in that.

As the sun sinks lower and the skies grow darker in the deepening twilight, the star of Faith shines more brightly and Hope sings more clearly and sweetly. Every evening, when the sun goes down, I can see that land of Eternal Morning. I know it is there, not because I have seen it, but because I do see it. The Shadowless Land, “where we shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; where God shall dwell with men, and they shall be His people, and He shall wipe away all tears from their eyes”.

His last published expression to the great number of his readers was a letter written for the *Los Angeles Times*, to be published upon his 70th birthday, and in that he sums up his experiences of the past, his impressions and the realization of his dream of seventy, and his faith for the future, in these words:

The days of our years are three score years and ten.

When I was a little boy I heard Dr. Henry G. Weston, then pastor of the First Baptist Church of Peoria, Ill., preach a sermon from that passage in the ninetieth Psalm. And when I was a big boy—as big as I ever grew to be—I heard

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Henry Ward Beecher preach from the same text. These two sermons by two great preachers burned into the very soul of me. There was nothing terrifying about them. They were gentle; mighty in their reassuring quality. They made the life that now is a certain thing to me. Whatever other problems might remain to be insoluble mysteries the minimum duration of life was to me a fixed fact. I might, by the loving wisdom of the Creator, live to be a very old man. But if I lived anywhere near right, die before seventy I would not.

I believed in that measure of life with a boy's unquestioning belief in the Book. It never left me, and it has not failed me. I never questioned it, and I have all my life been an old-fashioned believer in the Bible.

This question of the uncertainty of life is one that naturally enough has often come up. I have never had but one argument, which I paraphrased from the disciple Philip, "Watch me and see". I said it positively at least more than fifty years ago. I have said it at frequent intervals since. And I am going out of this month July, having leaned on that assurance "three score years and ten". I am not at all surprised. I am grateful; lovingly, happily, joyously grateful. But I always knew it.

I have been afraid in the face of threatening peril many and many a time. I have felt the human fear of death, often enough, even when I was confident I would not die. I have often enough been frightened by the fear of harm—I know the extreme dread of physical pain. I was a soldier for three years. I have fought through a score of battles. I never went into one of them without feeling my heart sink at the fear of a wound.

But I never prayed that I might be kept from death. I was too young to die. I knew that. But to be hurt with the cruelty of war! To writhe under some mangling wound; to suffer all night long writhing in a pelting storm, under the throbbing lunge of bayonet or the fierce shock of shot or shell—this filled me with fainting terror.

How does it feel to reach the official limit of life? Well there is no shock. You knew all the time it was coming. You come to harbor expectantly, don't you? As Frederick the Great said to his Grenadiers, recoiling for the third time before the flaming thunder of the Austrian guns—"What, then, do you

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want to live forever?" No matter how smooth and beautiful the sea, no matter how pleasant the ship, you want to get to port some time; you want to get home some day; you don't want to sail round and round forever. There is a better world than this; a fairer one; lovelier skies and sweeter fields. This world isn't a treadmill. It's a country through which you are journeying. The way of your pilgrimage leads somewhere. Don't you want to get to where you're going? Or are you like Booker Washington's old colored woman—"Where you going, auntie?" "Law bless you, honey, I'se done bin whah I'm gwine."

One very impressive feeling comes to you on the morning of your seventieth birthday. If you believe as I do, this is your last birthday anniversary. No more birthdays. Why, if you look at it through my spectacles, you're through with time. This is the beginning of eternity.

Some men passing on from this point say, "Now I am living on borrowed time." Not much you are not. There is no such thing as borrowed time. It's the freest gift in the universe. I may live for five years yet; or ten. If I do it will be on the same kind of time as composed the seventy years I have lived already, not one of which was borrowed. If you borrow anything you expect to repay it. Well, you can't pay back any time. If I went to the only One who can give me time, I'd as soon ask for a thousand years—it's only a watch in the night to Him—as for a day. I could repay the one as easily as I can the other. "Lord, let me have a couple of thousand years?" "Surely, man; when will you give them back?"

No, I don't "feel just as young as I used to be". Not so young, even, as I felt ten years ago; I have met men who felt at seventy just as they did at twenty-five. They have told me so themselves. But the Lord only knows how they felt at twenty-five. I don't feel nearly so well as I did at sixty. But I have an idea that maybe I'll pick up a little in the "velvet" time that may be coming to me.

One thing I do know where I have the advantage over the youth of twenty-five. I can go into heaven now without any misgivings. I won't stop and apologize, and explain how I happen to come along ten or fifteen years ahead of my appointed time. I have lived out my "three score years and ten". I have been

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trusted on the earth the fullness of my allotted time. As for the velvet days that may be given—well, Moses says all the rest of it, the very “pride” of it, is only “labor and sorrow”. And he ought to know; he tried it for fifty years longer.

For the matter of those human burdens, they may yet be given to me. Very little have I known of them in my allotted “three score and ten”. Good years have they been to me. So little sickness has there been in them, and so little pain, and all the pain and sickness were sent along in the years of the later time, in which I had grown used to living, and accustomed to the sudden surprises of life, and had plenty of time for sickness.

I have had so few disappointments they have hardly been worth entering on the books, and the great majority have been through my own fault, as indeed have been about all my troubles. Very few of them can I charge up against the dear Lord. In fact, the worst I have gotten into, He has done His best to keep me out of, and I have worked my way into them in spite of Him. And I have never known Him to hesitate to help me out of them. And it seems to me I rarely, if ever, had to cry to Him for help. All I had to do was to let Him help me—just to keep my hands off and let Him do for me.

I have lived with this world now for seventy years, in it and on it and for it. It has paid me fair wages and has insisted on the full tale of brick every day. It has never overpaid me, but it has never held back my salary, because I always found out in time to call a strike about a week before the date of the lock-out. It has been a good, fair world to live in with both eyes wide open, but it is no world for fools. I am as ready to leave it as I was to come into it. And as I was brought into it without my wishes being consulted, I will expect to be called out of it just as summarily, and will go just as willingly as I came.

The letters and cards that came to him were read as the postman brought them, and his eye lighted with many a smile, dimmed with many a tear, and his heart was made joyous with many a glad recollection as they touched some chord of memory. They came from his old friends at Peoria and Burlington, from his birth-

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place at Greensboro, from the old homes at Ardmore and Bryn Mawr, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Lakes to the Gulf, expressing love and friendship, hope and cheer, encouragement, words of recollected inspiration from his voice and pen, a veritable treasure trove of stimulating and joyous recollection.

It was a beautiful vision he had backward toward the years in which he was made to feel his work had been genuinely joyous and helpful, and forward to the rewards of faith and trust and labor of which he felt so sure. His whole view of life was sweet, tolerant and kindly. Of California, in which he had had so much of honor, happiness and joy, he said:

It is where it rains a little every morning when you want to work, and the sun shines all afternoon when you want to play, and it grows dark and quiet at night.

And that might have been said with equal truth of the years of his life, for it had rained in his life much of pathos; there had been much sunshine of humor and gladness, and he saw it grow dark and quiet at night with a splendid faith and a beautiful trust in the future beyond the sea.

The entry in his diary for the day following, Friday, July 31st, was:

Began the morning after with a jolly breakfast, then a quiet morning with myself and Violet in the sun room and Robin at the piano. Such a lovely morning and such a delightful day. The loveliest drive in the afternoon—down to San Pedro by the coast road. Beautiful! Home by the inland turnpike. The birthday and “the morning after” were beautifully auspicious, weather and physical condition—full of promise and radiant hope. And oh, the joy of having Robin here! It brings the old days back again just to hear him at the piano—just to talk

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with him. And Violet's tenderness multiplies itself tenfold as the hours go by—so thoughtful—sweet. My dear, dear sweetheart wife!

The world well tried, the sweetest thing in life,
Is the unclouded welcome of a wife.

But the philosophical contemplation of life and its burdens to which he had schooled himself, is reflected in an entry in his diary of August 3rd:

The day has lived itself. One day at a time, so life runs on. Well for us that we do not have to carry all the burden of seventy years in one day or one year. Well for us that there are no long stretches in the march, no long conflicts in the battle of life. Life comes to us only one day at a time. Even tomorrow is not ours until it comes as today. A sweet and blessed secret this living from day to day. God's own loving hand tenderly lets down the soft curtain of night upon the close of each day.

He became unconscious on Tuesday, August 4th, and lingered in that state for three days. On Tuesday, August 18th, he wrote:

After it was over and past, they told me, long days after, that this day was the crisis. I can remember nothing about it save that love hovered around and over me more tenderly than ever, and came closer to me as the world seemed to drift farther away.

Our principal concern then was to restore his strength sufficiently that he might be taken back to Sunnycrest.

His Philosophy of Life is summed up in some paragraphs from the little book bearing that name:

Well, I have always loved to work. It has been pleasant in the old mill, with its rafters bronzing by the years, its shadowy corners, its far views from the dormers up in the loft, the mysterious gurglings and murmurings of hidden waters down deep among the foundations, the quiet pond and the earnest rush

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of the race, and the merry laughter of the "tail race". For I ground my finest flour from the grist the people brought me. The best of my work might have been done much better; the worst of it had better been left undone; all of it has been mediocre. But I ground the grist that was brought me, and took only fair toll. And some day, in a better mill, with improved machinery, with finer material, with choicer grist, a steadier power and a better light I will do better work.

A good father and a good mother—"old-fashioned"? Well, yes; about as old-fashioned as fathers and mothers have been since the birth of Cain—taught me from a Good Book that the way of life and the plan of salvation is so simple and plain that not even the philosophers could muddle it—"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God." That's plain enough until some learned man begins to explain it. If that's all that God wants of me, I don't care what the "Apostle's Creed", or the "Thirty-nine Articles", or the "Confession of Faith" demands of me. But that seems to include about everything. And yet I believe in creeds. How can a man live without a standard?

I never worry about the Day of Judgment. That there will be one I am positive. That it will be as dreadful as John of Patmos describes, I believe. But terrible as it will be to have all one's sins uncovered and set before God and the world, naked and in the light of day, that won't be one-half so terrible as it was to have committed them. And yet that we rather enjoyed.

And another most dreadful thing about the Day of Judgment is the fact that somebody knows all about our sins now. There never was a "secret sin" since the serpent invaded Eden. There have been at least three living eyewitnesses to every offense—the sinner, the victim, who is frequently only the other sinner, and the Judge who is going to try you both. The best time to get scared about the Day of Judgment is about ten minutes before you make a fool of yourself.

Life has been to me a pilgrimage of joy. I've never had very much trouble, and what I have had has been of my own making and selection, and when I went to the hospital I took my medicine without making faces or asking for "sympathy".

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I was ashamed to. Like "Peter and the Pain Killer", I knew I was only getting what I had asked for. But up one hill and down the other the pilgrimage had lain through pleasant places—good roads, safe trails, fine pasturage, sweet water and beautiful camping places. A few giants, mostly wind-mills; millions of midgets and mosquitoes, troublesome but not fatal; occasionally a mean man, so ashamed of himself that he lied about it; now and then a liar; once in a while a hold-up man, with a subscription paper; and all along the way a horde of beggars.

But in the main good people; kind-hearted, generous people, honest people. Lots of houses built close "by the side of the road". The world is full of friendly people for friendly men. And I'm fond of people. I believe in them, I love them. I sympathize with them. I like to meet them, and to walk with them, and to have them about me, so long as they can stand me.

A young disciple one day asked me, when I was pastor of the Temple, "Pastor, how can I learn to trust God? How can I acquire faith?" And I said, "That is easy and simple. Just lie down at night and go to sleep. You are helpless and defenseless as a dead person. You do not see the storm gathering above your home, with black destruction in its whirling wings. You cannot see the tiny tongue of flame catching at the corner of the room in which you sleep. You do not hear the robber stealthily unfastening the fancied security of lock and bolt. You know absolutely nothing of the score of evils that may be threatening your peace and safety. The night may be ghastly with perils all about you. But you sleep sweetly, safely, and you awake in the morning refreshed and strengthened. Protecting love has enfolded you like a garment. And you believed it would when you lay down, else you never could have gone to sleep. Well, that's trust. That's perfect trust. Just hold on to it while you are awake. Who takes care of you while you sleep? Not father and mother. Not the servants. Not the watchdog. Nor the policeman a mile away. 'Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.' You trust in God, that's all."

Do I believe in laughter as much as ever I did? A great deal more than ever I did, even in the days that were ripples

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of dimples on the sunlit eddies of a river of laughter. How could life be best lived without it—God's exclusive gift to his human children? Laughter is a good servant. But don't overwork him or he will sulk, and maybe strike for shorter hours. Don't smile so much all day that the corners of your mouth droop with weariness when you come home at night. "Always leave them with a laugh" is the axiom of a commercial traveler who has no home.

Laughter is cheery, good-natured, willing, but wearies easily. He is a poor hand at "day's work" and tires at a continuous job. He is a thoroughbred, and must be humored and well groomed. You can't work him like a plow-horse. He shines most brightly at "piece work". He must needs have intervals of quiet meditation; sober reflection; tranquil introspection. He must have the inspiration of earnest purpose; the repose of a little minute of prayer.

Don't mistake the everlasting barnyard cackle that emanates from between the roof of the mouth and the epiglottis for laughter. Unless there is brain and heart—intellect and love in it—it isn't the laughter that I know anything about. The thing on the face of a skull is a grin, but it isn't a smile. It used to be, but the smile died when it became perpetual. No matter what the empty-headed philosophers say on the post-cards, don't try to smile all the time. Unless you want people to hate the sight of you.

Life is a book in which we read a page a day. We can't read a page ahead; we can not turn clear over to the last chapter to see how it ends, because we write the story ourselves, setting the type, as a good compositor can do, from the copy of our own thoughts and actions, till the evening of each day runs off the edition. The best compositor is he who sets each day's page with the fewest errors, and wastes the least time correcting a "dirty proof".

Even with the best of us, much of each day's page is an "errata" correcting the mistakes of yesterday. Unsinkable ships—the bottom of the sea is covered with them. Invulnerable armor—it cumbers the reefs, full of holes. Incontrovertible arguments and incontestable theories—they lie dusting in the scrap-heaps of history and philosophy, answered, contradicted, disproved and thrown away. But the pages are—

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or should be—growing cleaner every day. The compositor learns. The child is fearless, knowing nothing. So he grasps the flaming candle. The old man is cautious, knowing too much. He knows that ice burns like fire.

And another thing to be remembered about this book of life which every one of us is writing, each for himself. The pages are all the same size—twenty-four hours, brevier measure. “The evening and the morning was the first day.” That established the standard. And every morning the inexorable office boy with the intolerable name stands at your door shouting “copy!” And you’ve got to furnish it. Got to. Got to. Got to. Kill your grandmother once a week to get to the ball game if you will—that goes into your “story” and fills up that day’s page. That’s life.

Is the world as funny as it used to be? Funnier, my son; a great deal funnier. It grows “funnier” as you grow older. But it doesn’t know it, because it is apt to be “funniest” when it thinks it is wisest. Laughter grows more serious as it contemplates the funny old world. The tragedies of the years temper the jests. Yes; I understand. I read a paragraph about myself in a critical editorial the other day, saying that “ten years of the ministry had taken much of the ginger out of old Bob’s fun”.

It was written by a young man of course. The things that are funny to him were uproariously funny to me fifty years ago. I used to write funny sketches about sudden death and funerals. But during ten years of the ministry I have sat beside many deathbeds, and have stood beside many caskets trying to speak words of consolation for breaking hearts. Today, I can’t laugh over “Buck Fanshaw’s Funeral”—the funniest mortuary narrative ever written.

Misfortunes used to be my principal stock in trade for mirthful sketches. Ten years in the ministry have made the sorrows of thousands of people my own. What a rollick there used to be in a good poker story, told in rattling phrase. I have seen too many homes broken up and too many lives wrecked by the gamblers to appreciate the humor of the cards. Twice I have seen men murdered at the gaming table—and each murder was followed by a hanging. Hard to write funny poker stories with those grisly phantoms of blood and stran-

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gling leering up into your face from the white sheet under your pen. Eh?

And when there was nothing else to write about on a dull day, the drunkard was always an unfailing figure for comedy. What could be funnier than a drunken man? Well, now I can no more appreciate the drunken man, even on the comic stage, than the wife whose face he bruised with his clenched fist could appreciate the antics of her drunken husband. I have seen the brute too often at close range, with all the old manhood gone, and not a thing but the brute and the devil left.

Oh, I enjoy life better than ever I did. I can assure my critic that "ginger is still hot i' the mouth". The world is just as funny as ever. But the fun has changed with the point of view. Don't you understand, son? It's the old story of the frogs and the boys. Humor is a matter of personal taste, to a great extent. What sends your neighbor into convulsions of mirth may disgust you to the very soul. . . .

The shadows are deepening around the pond and the stream is singing itself to sleep. But there is yet a little grist in the hopper, and while the water serves I will keep on grinding. And by the time the sun is down, and the flow in the race is not enough to turn the big wheel, the grist will have run out, and I will have the old mill swept and tidied for the night. And then, for home and a cheery evening, a quiet night, lighted with stars and pillow'd with sleep. And after that, the dawning, and another day; fairer than any I have ever seen in this beautiful world of roseate mornings and radiant sunsets.

From Thursday, August 21st, to Monday, August 31st, there are no entries in his diary, the reason for which is indicated by his entry of August 15th:

"Mighty sick." Nothing very important happens to a man lying on his back wondering what has happened to him. I am very sick, but do not know how long I have been so.

And above the blank pages afterwards he penciled a heading:

These monotonous days of sickness give no seed for thought and still less incident,

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The beginning of September found him growing weaker, but his spirit still strong. On September 1st he writes:

Another month begins with love and mercy, and I know it will rain blessings for thirty days to come. Not pleasures, which are evanescent and shortlived at the best and longest, but the blessings of God, which endure forever. Every morning this month will see a new day's journey begun with God for a companion. I will not walk one day without my Shepherd so I will not walk astray. Thirsting, I will follow my Shepherd beside still waters. Weary, I will lie down in green pastures and refresh my soul. All the way He will lead me. Some of the days will be dark and some will be stormy. There will be danger and there will come sorrow. But the worst day will be safe as the best, and be the journey long or short, at the last I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Welcome the month and its days.

And the same spirit is indicated in the entry for September 12th:

Had a good nap in the afternoon and came to curfew "feelin' fine". I am wonderfully encouraged. Hope is so strong that I cannot make the possible disappointments frighten me. I seem to be growing stronger by weakness. But with age, our disappointments linger longer than they did in youth. We think more about them. Youth has a way of trampling them under foot that we lose in age just when we most need to cultivate that contempt for them. After all, our disappointments are our own self-inflicted penalties for our greater devotion to our own schemes, rather than to God's plans for us.

On September 13th he wrote:

I find that writing is an increasing burden to my awkward hands.

Until his body grew so weak that the physical task of writing was impossible, he was loyal to his pen and typewriter. This is the entry for September 17th:

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

My siesta lasted until 4 P. M., and I could have slept longer, but I want to write a column for the *Times*—the first thing I have written since I was seventy years old.

September 19th:

I finished my *Times* article, “A Sick Man Goes to War.”

His last contribution to the *Times* was written late in September—“Don’t Duck Jim”:

Jim in the front rank is dodging “the big ones”. Right behind him his file closer, Bill, trying to imitate him, reproves him:

“Don’t duck, Jim, doggone it—I’m right behind you!”

The sentiment may be gathered from the closing paragraph:

Boy, honored by any station on the firing line, when the firing is the hottest, when the temptation to run is the fiercest, when fear is stronger than honor, forget yourself. Think of the fellows right behind you, whose good name God has entrusted to you, who will fall down if you shrink, who will run if you tremble, who will get drunk if you drink, who will lie if you “prevaricate”, and “don’t duck, Jim”. Think of the poor fellow behind you.

His weakness increased in latter September, for on September 25th he says:

I think I am growing weaker these days. I cannot walk so far, and I come home from my drives a little more weary than formerly.

But his humor survived his weakness. His teeth had been through his life a source of constant pain and trouble, and he inveighs against them on September 26th:

Teeth were the first curse of the human race. Sin came with the first bite of the forbidden fruit. My teeth have been to me a source of disfigurement and pain and all manner of

THE CLOSING YEARS

trouble ever since I have known anything about them. The ways of the Creator are wonderful indeed, but I must say He has done about the worst dental work for me I ever knew to misfit the mouth of a human being. I don't know what I would have done but for the improvements now and then of human workmen.

September 27th, his diary is headed—

Roy's birthday—thirty-two years old, [this written in very large print], and he weighs 180 pounds. Here his Daddy is over seventy, [and written in very small print] and he weighs only 139 pounds.

And that same day, with a sweet joy, he made his final effort at concentration on expression with rhythm and wrote for Roy's birthday, the following:

To MY SON ROY

A Prayer for his 32nd birthday

Dawn of another Year! Come closer, Mighty Guide!
A new path stretches from my earthly door;
Dim mountains rise, and far before me leads
A trail my feet have never trod before.

Time brings more burdens. My task is just begun,
Then bring new labor songs for me to sing;
You've taught me hymns to greet the rising sun,
Now teach me how to praise the noon-day King.

Chansons of Service! Let my gladdened eyes
Laugh with the glory of each passing day;
Glad with the gladness of some sweet surprise
That marks the blessing of each passing day.

Make every day a Birth-day—God my Hope,
New plans; new joys; new duties and new dreams;
Give me new light when midst the fogs I grope,
And lead my wandering feet beside still streams.

Lovingly, DADDY.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

Just before he left Eventide to return to Sunnycrest, he wrote on September 28, 1914:

I do trust God. It is little to my credit. I am so helpless I can do nothing else but trust. Lord, I can no longer try to help others. I can no longer do any good to others. Lead me day by day into the splendor of trust and joy and hope and of love.

The return to Sunnycrest was on September 30th, and his diary has only occasional and fragmentary observations until October 17th, when he says:

Splendid night, fine morning. Woke up feeling fine. Got over it by shaving, which I inflicted on myself.

The last efforts with his typewriter was when he outlined a word of greeting in response to the real estate men of Pasadena, who solicited an expression from him. The manuscript showed failing strength and inability to concentrate upon the mechanism which had served him so many years.

He seemed to realize himself the nearness of the end of his journey, for on October 21st he wrote:

Dr. Nichols called early this morning before 8 o'clock. I reckon I must be getting worse. I know I am keeping no stronger. I shaved myself about 11 o'clock and the operation made me very tired. Got one letter in the morning mail, which Sara answered for me. It was from a correspondent who sent me a package of casaba melon seed, and wanted to know when and under what circumstances God made up his mind to destroy the race of men.

And the last entry in his diary is on Sunday, November 1st:

It is very hard to write. I guess my writing days are ended and the amanuensis will come on deck for duty.



MR. BURDETTE IN HIS "SUNNYCREST" STUDY, TAKEN SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEATH

THE CLOSING YEARS

He became unconscious a few days later, lingered in that state, with occasional momentary flashes of consciousness, until he died on November 19th.

His parting message to Temple Baptist Church, given to me as I stood by his bed during his last conscious moments, was—

Give to my dear church that we builded together, my best, best love, and to my pastor and the dear, dear Sunday School, my best, best love.

These last months were filled with suffering, but with a cheer and a joy that was characteristic of his spirit. It was a benediction to care for him, and when, after lingering days of unconsciousness the spirit was freed, the world mourned with those whose hearts were sore and broken, and expressions of sympathy and appreciation and tender devotion came from men and women who felt that his contribution to life had been so much richer and deeper and more far-reaching than he had ever realized.

The day before his spirit fled, a beautiful tribute was paid him by T. Howard Wilson:

LINES TO BURDETTE

By T. Howard Wilson

He kept the world in leash with sunny talk
A sweet philosopher of smile and fun,
He was a comrade of the little folk,
Who live alway beneath the good warm sun;
Quaint twists he gave to words that kindled joy,
No sombre thing could in his presence thrive,
A man in whom was never lost the boy
However thick the darkling shades that strive
To lure from master truths that open lie
In fine simplicity. With vision clear

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

He traced the mystic labyrinths of sky
And Earth and saw no thing with eyes of fear.
Those bitter words that 'scape the tongues of men,
Wild jargon of the race that scar with pain,
The dregs of hate, were shut without his ken,
His thoughts fell on the world like gentle rain.

But now he treads the wine press all alone;
And yet, within the valley where he lies,
Methinks a seraph band in joyous tone
Uplifts a welcome paean to the skies
And round him angel thoughts from far and near
Come fluttering like wafted asphodels
To soothe his fevered brow with calm and cheer,
While flower spirits swing their tinkling bells.
And if, and if the voyage soon must come
From sphere of light to light of other spheres,
We'll keep his kindly humor as a chum
To walk with us adown the falling years.

CHAPTER XIII

SOME INTIMATE PHASES

BEFORE this record is closed and the final tribute is made I feel that there should be set down more intimate glimpses of the burning fire of the spirit which has been so constantly revealed in the preceding pages. In the close relationships of home the assertion can be made with all truth and no reservations, that just as Mr. Burdette gave expression of it to the public on every occasion, so he revealed his wonderful spirit in the innermost sacredness of family life. There was little reaction of spirit, so often credited to temperamental people. If there was, the hour alone with his own soul and with God conquered it. We, who knew and loved him best, always revelled in that sweetness and tenderness which he so peculiarly and abundantly possessed.

This may not have been always true, for it was but natural that a temperament as quick, active and virile as his should sometimes "be hot with temper unrestrained" and his brothers and sisters recall that as a boy he "would fight at the drop of the hat and if it did not drop he would see that it did". During the army days his anger strengthened his courage to fight and not until the after-war years had schooled him fully in self control was he able, "through the grace of God which overcometh all things," to turn to service this passion which had sometimes almost mastered him.

He always expressed his positive belief that humor was so close to pathos they could not be separated, and used the life of Charles Lamb, one of the greatest of

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

humorists, to illustrate how true humor is born of trouble and sorrow. In his own life was the setting of this background, not only the memory of struggles with early poverty, the grief over the loss of loved ones, but the ever present tragedy of contest with a trouble, or was it a disease? Not of the head or the heart surely, but a disarrangement of the nervous system, aggravated perhaps by fatigue from travel and over-work in his profession.

At times, like many another genius, he turned in his uncontrollable weakness to stimulant for solace. It may be, who knows, his occasional stumbling by the way in the earlier days chastened and so blessed him with that glorified sympathy which in the later years seemed to reach out from his very soul to protect and help those similarly afflicted. Biographers as a rule give us only the best from the lives of their heroes, but I would be false to a sacred trust in recording the greatest achievements in the life of my husband, if I did not repeat in his own words the reply to a pleading letter from an intimate friend, based on the thought that the cure lay in his own will.

BRYN MAWR, Saturday morning.

DEAR MRS. M——:

It was the thought of a friend, good and sincere and kind, to write as you did. You see why I wanted to come home as fast as steam and wheels could carry me.

All that you say I have thought of, not for a day and for once and twice but for a long, long time and a thousand times. They creep into my thoughts at my desk; they make thorny a sleepless pillow; they come into my jests with bitter mockery on the platform; while people are laughing at a man with a heart so heavy and sore that his face is only a grotesque mask. Think of these things? I would give anything in the world if I could quit thinking of them long enough to get quiet and rested.

SOME INTIMATE PHASES

Don't worry yourselves thinking about me. There will be no more trouble anyhow for three months. The period is as regular as the calendar. And the fall is like a man stepping off a wall in the dark. There is no fear, no apprehension beyond the dread that is constantly present—until the step is taken. He just steps off, and there is no use in his screaming after that.

I didn't intend to say more than "thank you" with all sincerity for your letter. But I have gone on and burdened you with my troubles. I won't write you in this vein again. I quit making promises long ago. The man who means them the least makes them the most fluently. But I want to assure you that I am not hopeless. I don't give up. I am sure that I will overcome this, yet. I hope and pray and am strong in my belief that the dreaded days will come sometime and pass by without touching me. I am sure of this.

This is no secret of mine. All my family know of it. And their patience and gentleness and tenderness make my own condemnation the more terrible. But please God the morning will dawn sometime.

Meanwhile, we must live and we must work at the only thing I can do and go on in my light-hearted business of making people laugh and assuring them that life is a bed of roses with a counterpane of sunshine—no wonder that the wise man of old time said of laughter, "It is made."

Good-bye; God bless you for your kind words and the friendly heart that prompted them.

Sincerely your friend,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

God's answer to our sincere prayers are often given through human agencies and His answer to the constant petition was finally fully given through the immediate environment of comfortable surroundings, relief from financial worry, an all-absorbing, continuous work to do, sympathetic understanding and all-surrounding love that daily gave strength to courage.

All this he felt deeply about, and as I sat by his

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bedside at twilight, Sunday evening, August 23d, after his three days of coma, he said:

I feel as Riley does—I am anxious to see what Heaven is like. I know this world, I have traveled over its lands and seas—I know what life here is, now I want to know what Heaven is. It will be the greatest surprise I have ever had. I have thought a great deal about it, preached about it, theorized about it and here I am with nothing left but to go to Heaven, and I don't know what it will be like. Will there be nothing but harp music there—I have heard better orchestras than that here. Will it be singing—mostly feminine voices with the volume left out—that would not be perfect music. And the robes—our ideas are all ancient. Certainly the dear Lord must have some modern idea.

But my darling, how will I find you? You and I must be together. Our life has been so wonderful together, we have had the same interests, we have walked side by side, we have so loved and you who have been my good angel with healing wings that have overshadowed me, heaven would not be heaven without you by my side.

Many of the marked personal peculiarities of his mature public years were but the natural development of the boyish tricks and manners. His sister, writing of his part in the early family life, says:

Rob and his whistle are indelibly connected in my memory.

And his son says:

many were the songs of the church which he hummed and whistled while busy in his den. Siloam was one of his favorite hymns. Many a summer's morning in the yesterdays of boyhood have I watched him shaving while the strains of this old hymn, sung by his own mother in the “days befo' the wah” when Peoria was a frontier city in the far west, was whistled and sung alternately by him.

He nearly always whistled or sang before he arose in the morning not only because he believed that one

SOME INTIMATE PHASES

should start the day in a happy frame of mind, but because "it just did itself". This cheery spirit of him was always good medicine for the household.

To have rollicked through life with a song and a whistle and to have earned his living by talking and to have never known he was tongue-tied until he was sixty-one years old, was what he considered the greatest joke of his life.

Mr. Burdette was passionately fond of music. His poetic temperament was tried more by the sentiment than by the technique. In speaking of his own accomplishments once, he said:

I play the fiddle by note, ear and main strength, and to avoid getting into deep water I never attempt any compositions that have been written within the past seventy-five years.

He came of a family of nine children, four girls and five boys, and his father used to speak of having just enough for a quadrille set and a fiddler, and it is easy to believe that "Bob" played many parts. Later many of his own poems were set to music. "Alone", "When my Ship Comes In" and for words of his, John Philip Sousa wrote the music to "Reveille" in 1890.

A comment of his found among his notes reads:

The report of a Sunday meeting where they heard "The Star Spangled Banner" and "Dixie". One called forth shouts and hand clapping. The other—the men stood up in silence and uncovered heads. "Dixie" is a shout—a rollick. "The Star Spangled Banner" is a prayer.

Another personal peculiarity is revealed in a correspondence between him and a young newspaper woman who was carrying on a campaign against the wearing of mustaches. She had unwittingly taken the advice of

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someone to write to the author of "The Rise and Fall of the Mustache" for assistance and encouragement in the highly exciting endeavor. His reply follows:

SUNNYCREST, PASADENA,
Christmas-tide, 1912.

MY DEAR "HELEN HOYT":

Alas, you have sounded the trumpet call for reinforcements at the wrong camp. The man who told you didn't hear straight. My "Rise and Fall of the Mustache" made its "fall" its glory.

I never had a razor touch my upper lip. I have worn hair on it more than sixty-eight years. All the mighty men of earth's generations have worn hair on their faces from the days of Samson to the Emperor William. What would Barbarossa look like without the big red beard growing down through the stone table? Who would be afraid of Blackbeard with a Richard-Harding-Davis bald face? What would Blue Beard be with a shaven lip? Imagine a bare-faced Santa Claus. King David went to war to avenge the shaving of his ambassadors. The "oath on the beard" is as old as history. Mohammedans still swear by the "beard of the prophet". The Cecils, Greshams, Raleighs, Drakes and Walsinghamhs of England were bearded folks. All the royal houses of Europe today go bearded like the bard. The cavalier beard marked the gentleman.

"Votes for Women" and whiskers for men! We are determined to keep something masculine that is all our own. "Sideboards" are already back into wear in England. Women, priests and actors may go barefaced as they will. Real men are going to wear hair on their faces. Germs? Statistics show that bearded men live longer, have better teeth, less sore throat, and stronger voices than baldfaced men. Hospital statistics prove that not one case of masculine pneumonia in seventeen has whiskers. And tuberculosis is sweeping the beardless Indians off the earth.

Sorry I can't help you, daughter, but I stand by the bearded monsters of my sex.

Cordially yours,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

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The courage to be so "exceptional" was the same kind of spirit that made him in his teens "swagger like a dandy and tilt his hat over one ear". And yet the pill-box cap and the setting-up exercises of the army brought to the later years times when the military bearing and the dignified "top hat" gave the impression of a much larger man than five feet four would measure. With all his courage he was a shy, timid man in certain ways and it was said of him:

He had ever been a bashful boy, grievously tormented with his hands and sore stricken with his feet in company and much given to the sitting on the edges of chairs.

So strong were these habits of youth, I have many and many a time seen him come onto a platform and while waiting for the formal introduction, sit on the edge of the chair, double up his fists and place them one on top of the other with a little beating motion, rise and walk to the front of the platform with an uncertain tread, as if he was too shy to talk, while in the heart of him he knew that before three sentences were uttered his audience "would rise to my fly" and they would rollick with him through two hours of lecture that always left them better and happier.

In later years he had some peculiarities, which were different from the ordinary minister. He seldom spoke over twenty minutes and always put into his sermon some dramatic turn which made the audience remember it. For example, once he preached on the story of the withered hand. All during the sermon he held one hand and arm perfectly still and when he came to the point where he quoted "stretch forth thy hand", he lifted with dramatic effect that hand which for twenty minutes he had held absolutely still.

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It may not be unusual that a nature like his should care little for money except for the comfort and freedom it might bring that enabled him to be a better workman, and that he might contribute the same to others. He entered upon a great adventure once with never a thought of financial possibilities.

His purse may not have had much but his heart was full of hope and courage and devotion that compelled success. When a young couple came to Mr. Burdette once to be married and after the ceremony he discovered they hadn't but fifty cents between them, he told them to keep it and gave them a dollar, saying, "Go out and get a little wedding supper. I know how it is myself".

While his earning ability was much above his fellow-craftsmen, he was never a saver of money, and it slipped from him more rapidly than it came. He comforted himself with his usual philosophical humor when he said:

I do not believe very much in saving anyhow. I once bent my energies to the task of saving up a barrel of money, and when I got it saved a man said he knew just the best place in the world to plant it to make it grow, so I gave it to him and he planted it. Planted it well, too; away down below the frost line. It is there yet. It may come up on resurrection day, but I doubt it. And every time I think of it I cry. I wish I had spent it myself.

And yet he was not given to spending money for himself further than the usual necessities of life. His chief concern was for others who had not his earning capacity or who through misfortune were unequal to meeting the demands of life. He helped in the education of various young people of his family and made regular contributions for many years toward the care and support of an invalid sister who survived him. He

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was always a helpful brother to both brothers and sisters and when sending checks he always made some observation which to say the least was not an obvious one:

I enclose a plaster for chilblains. Put it where it will do the most good.

I enclose a little check as an advance agent of prosperity.

Another note:

I sent a V. for her Easter hat. A girl at her age likes these things and gets blessed few of them.

On the other hand, he wrote to one of his sisters:

A retired grocer out here tried to collect one of—or—bills about \$85.00 from me a few weeks ago. He is slowly recovering consciousness, but does not yet remember what hit him.

When going abroad once he entered into a contract with a young man to furnish weekly letters for a syndicate he was running. Mr. Burdette did his part often depriving himself of time for sight-seeing and going to the expense of gathering information and illustrations for the same. The young man paid him very little money and some six years after when he sent him \$100, leaving a balance of \$1300 still due, and saying he acted on Mr. Burdette's advice and paid all his other debts first, Mr. Burdette cancelled the rest of the debt with the advice that he pay the rest to the Lord.

A Ventura paper printed the following, headed "Bob Burdette's All Right":

In his opening remarks at the Commencement exercises last Thursday night, he said in effect:

"I came to Ventura to lecture on this occasion from purely commercial motives. I had intended and made a contract with the Board of Trustees to that effect, to soak them for seventy-five dollars for a lecture on 'Rainbow Chaser.' But when I heard the opening address of Prof. Kauffman, I immedi-

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ately chopped ten dollars off the bill and then when I heard Nat Brown in his splendid address and valedictory, I cut that bill down just fifteen dollars more. So the trustees will get this lecture for just fifty dollars."

This opening sally occasioned much merriment and was taken as another of Burdette's witticisms.

On the way to his hotel with F. W. Baker, he said, "My audience thought that was a joke, but I meant it." That he was as good as his word was evidenced by the following letter and statement received today by B. W. Dudley.

SUNNYCREST, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA,
June 16, 1903.

MY DEAR MR. DUDLEY:

Yours of the 13th just received. All right, I enclose a "Rainbow Chaser" to meet the requirements of the law. My agreement with the Committee was for \$75.00. But Ventura has always been good to me, I am very fond of the people there, and they gave me such a hearty reception and such a splendid class to "graduate with" that I think I got some of my fee in my welcome.

Cordially yours,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

STATEMENT

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA.
June 16th, 1903.

The Board of Trustees, Ventura High School

to

Robert J. Burdette, Dr.

To lecture on "Rainbow Chasers", Commencement night.....	\$75.00
Credit,	
By Enthusiastic Audience, Cordial Wel- come and Splendid Class.....	25.00
To Balance.....	\$50.00

And this in spite of the fact that his own accounts were frequently in "red ink". Here is his own illustration of this condition: A heavy sheet of paper with

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caption in large fancy lettering in red ink "*What do You do with All Your Money?*" Then in black ink a date and amount of deposits. An itemized list of amounts checked out, which is totaled in red ink, leaving a small balance of \$26.70. And in black ink, "I still owe printer's bill \$90.00 and Barker Bros. \$56.65." Total in red ink \$146.65, and in fancy letters, "Aw, what's the Use?"

On this is pasted a book that he had cut out of some advertisement bearing on its cover "Where have My Profits Gone?" Now this was just to please his own fancy, for no one ever saw it, but for the same pleasure and delight he spent time to illustrate with transferred pictures or pen sketches, cards, letters to friends, book inscriptions. He had a fancy for taking covers of old publications like the *Literary Digest* and decorating them with pictures clipped from other magazines, which would illustrate the title he was to put on in fancy lettering, such as "On the Ways" which meant that the notes and clippings filed in this cover were in dry dock to be set afloat when repaired or finished. His genius for this was most unusual. I have known him to write fifty or sixty titles for a book, a lecture or an article, only one of which was to be used, but all of them unusually striking and unique.

On a slip of paper stuck in one corner of the blotter on his desk he wrote:

My Laundry bill down here I set
Lest I forget, Lest I forget!
Yours truly—Robert J. Burdette.

This to remind him of something which certainly was not laundry. On another bit of irregular paper, two pieces pasted together, he had typed off records of what he styled "Rise and Fall of the Birthday Weights of

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R. J. B.", and these began with July 30, 1880, and came down to January, 1914, the year he died, and that year a record was made for every month up to a month before he died, September 30th, 139 pounds. By a queer coincidence which he noted, his greatest weight, 150 pounds, was the year he first came to California, the year he next came to California and the year he finally came out here to live.

It was his pleasure to remember his friends with autographed copies of books, photographs, and cards, the work of his mind and pen and in each case his inscriptions were intimately personal, sincere and never wholly formal. They would, if gathered together, make a little volume of fragrant memories, but I quote only a few at random:

From the same old friend in the same old place
To the young old friend with the sweet young face,
Nothing so young as the old and true
So the same old love I send to you.

In a book entitled, "How to Live on Twenty-four Hours a Day", he wrote:

To my busy Little Wife, who shows 'em how to do it on 48 hours a day, with a Christmas kiss from her Lazy Old Husband.

In a book sent as a Christmas gift to the President, he wrote the following inscription:

To
Woodrow Wilson
Head Master
of the
Greatest National School on Earth
Full of
Boys and Girls
Good, Bad and Indifferent;
White, Red, Yellow, Brown and Black

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A Very
Rainbow of Humanity
Presaging Clear Weather and a Beautiful Tomorrow
Restless; Eager; Turbulent and Tractable
This
With All Cheery Christmas Greeting
And All Loyal Affection
From One of His
Republican Boys, who is trying Hard to Be Good
But Hasn't yet got caught at it.
With the earnest Hope that the New Year will be
Even Better than the Old
Very Respectfully and Most Cordially

In a book which he purchased for himself, entitled,
“The Dawn of the World”, is this:

To my faithful Old Comrade—Myself: With whom I first saw the dawn of the world, and in whose constant companionship I am now watching its sunset—this, with the affectionate greetings of Robert J. Burdette.

He had a fashion of terse, epigrammatic and forceful expression of his ideas that got to the heart of his subject in a line or two, for example, in a letter to a clerical friend who had written some observations of California, he said:

I perceive in your pleasant notes on California you do not consider that numerical increase is an infallible indication of the spiritual life of the church. Neither do I. Nor, on the other hand, do I consider a steady decline in numbers an indication of the great powers of grace. So we are both happy.

Written under a photograph of his:

Some people are like carpet tacks—they mean the most mischief when they point upwards. Honestly yours, Robert J. Burdette.

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And on the back of a photograph sent to his son in the early nineties, is this inspiring bit of verse, "Comrades":

Comrade of mine when the way is long
We'll cheer the trail with a marching song;
When the battle breaks at the bugle call
We'll lock our shields in a fighting wall,
And strike good blows in a common might,
I to the left and you to the right.
When the twilight shade on the hills is bent,
We'll sit in the door of our evening tent
And talk of the joys of Long Ago,
And Tomorrow's hopes in the after-glow,
When the midnight's stars in the skies are set,
And the fire burns low and the embers fret,
We'll sleep on the down of a hard fought field,
On the velvet rest of a dented shield,
And rest till the bugle shall call away
To the nobler work of a longer day.

In a book given to his nurse two weeks before he died, he wrote his last inscription:

In the twilight of a friendship made tender by the shadows of farewell and with many memories of your constant care, most affectionately your friend, Robert J. Burdette.

He loved to call his friends by names that he himself attached to them and they became a cherished memory of these friends. Grace Hortense Tower, a newspaper woman whom Mr. Burdette afterwards married to John T. Warren, of Honolulu, wrote:

I can never forget the way he looked when he called me "Daughter" nor the sweetness of his smile when he used to call me by the name he gave me, "The Little Girl in the Corner."

His sister Mary he called "Little Dorrit" early in life, and later, "Burdock" after characters in books

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that he fancied. For the same reason he called his sister Anna, "Jo" after Jo in "Little Women". He called his own son, when a small boy, "The Prince" and himself to his son as "Zebsee". My son, Roy, he always called "buddie" and Roy's wife Helen, he early named "Blossom" and never called her by any other name. She in turn called him "Daddy-Bob-o-link" as she delighted to call me "Jonquil Mother". These intimate family names seemed to hold for him a sweet-ness of affectionate devotion that was the very essence of his heart life.

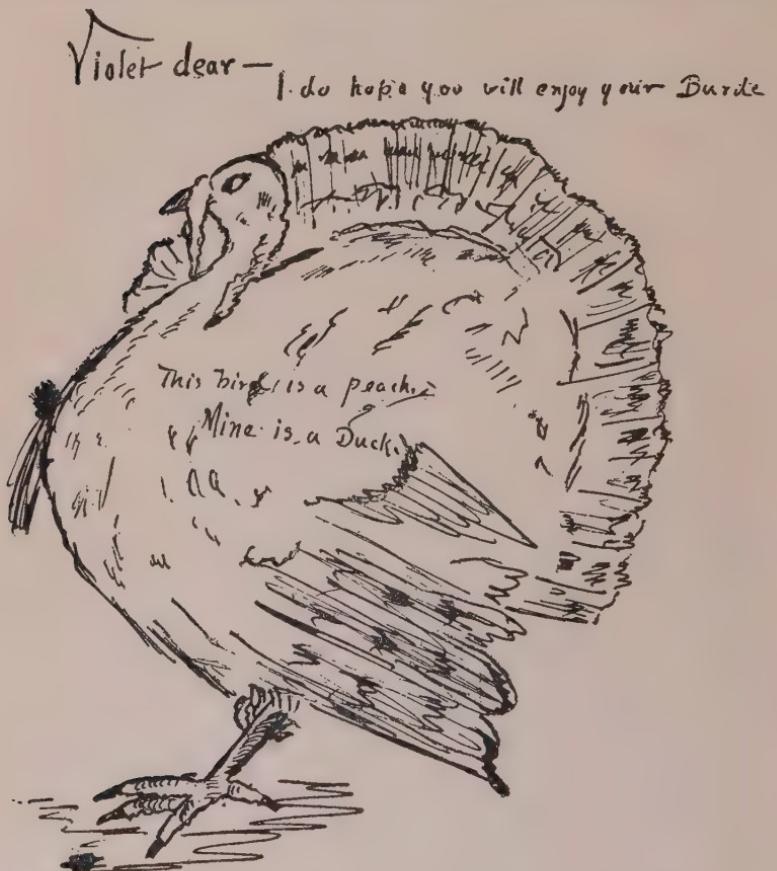
For no other name did he so let his fancy run riot as my own. Not more than half a dozen times in our years together do I remember of his calling me or writing of me by my given name, Clara. Most of them were endearing names, for which he was past master for creating and cannot be listed here, but are very sweet to the memory as the years glide past. The year before we were married he came to California, and at the entrance to my home was a large bed of fragrant white violets, and from that moment he called me "Violet"; marking my silver "Violet", writing his poems to that name and idealizing my life by the white violets.

In turn, not only his own boys, but many, many other young people called him "Daddy" with an affection that he used to declare "made the old man a boy again". As is frequently the case with public men, his name was sometimes used for commercial purposes, as when they named a cigar after him, and the South affectionately called a racing horse, "Robert J."

Naturally he loved much more the "Bob Burdette Club" of boys, a group of grade boys in Des Moines, Iowa, who organized in 1896, with their aim, "To keep

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

our own hearts glad and make some other heart glad every day". The name was chosen after the teacher had told them "The Story of Rollo" as given in a lecture by "the funny man, Robert J. Burdette". The name was soon shortened to "The Bobs" and as



'Just a few of the feathers, if you please!'

Robert Jay Bird Ette.

A BURDETTE THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATION.



MRS. ROBERT J. BURDETTE
“Violet”

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the boys grew older, they began bringing Mr. Burdette to Des Moines to lecture for them. The last time he went for them his lecture on "The Rainbow Chaser" made enough money for them to furnish their club house and pay \$125 into the building fund for a new church.

This message was received from them:

From Honolulu, China and the Islands of the Sea, always
The Bobs passed on the loving, kindly influence of their Patron
Saint, and when he went on into the sunset glow, the men who
had crowned him twenty years before, bared their heads and
reverently laid their roses of boyish love and manly allegiance
at the shrine of his memory.

He loved most of all the babies that admiring parents
had given his name to, forty-two of whom bore his name
in one form or another when he passed on. Even
since then there have been parents with fragrant
memories and appreciation in their hearts who have
called their little ones by his name.

One distant relative there is who early named herself Bob, because of her affection for him. And one stately woman there is, fine, regal and lovely, now in her widowed robes, who was to have been called after him, if she had been a boy, but being little sister instead, she was nicknamed "Bob". And when in later years she came to California to be married in one of the beautiful homes of Southern California, to a man as tall and handsome as herself, they built a little dais for Mr. Burdette to stand on when he performed the ceremony, that he might be as he said, "as high as her heart".

There was also named for him a little Kiowa Indian, "Robert Burdette Spotted Horse," whom he afterwards helped to educate and who wrote to him,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

made bead hatbands for him, with Mr. Burdette's name woven in them, and sent him cards and bits of remembrance. Under date of December 5, 1916, he wrote me from Rainy Mountain School:

GOTEBO, OKLAHOMA.

I am now in the sixth grade in school and I am doing my best and trying to learn. I hope I will grow up to be a good man and help my people on the Jesus road, and I will ask you to pray for me and all the rest of the children here at the school and also the old people at home—

Names of people in general it was difficult for him to recall, but incidents and faces were always "in the pictures" of his memory. A remarkable test of this was the fact that while pastor of Temple Church, he would stand at the door after service and greet the immense congregation and there would pass before him strangers from all over the United States. They had but to mention the town or city they came from and he would immediately recall some incident or person whom he saw when lecturing there many years before.

He had a retentive faculty that was the marvel of all who heard him lecture, preach or quote without notes that which he had written, passages of Scripture at length, poems and standard authors. The following from a newspaper will illustrate:

Speaking of Dr. Burdette reminds me of an occasion of those old newspaper days that revealed an insight into the humorist's memory that will always cling to me.

It appears that Dr. Burdette was to be one of the speakers at a rally of Pasadena citizens called to discuss some phase of city improvement. A platform was erected in a lot on South Fair Oaks Avenue, just east of Colorado.

I called Dr. Burdette on the telephone and asked him if it would be possible to secure an advance copy of the speech he intended making that evening.

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"Sure you can, son," he replied in that cheery manner of his. "Just send a messenger for it by noon and I will have it all written out for you."

Promptly at noon the messenger appeared at Dr. Burdette's home on South Orange Grove Avenue and secured the manuscript. Dr. Burdette, the good old soul, had typewritten it himself and at various points in the written speech he had inserted the words "applause", "laughter", etc. This struck me rather unusual at the time, so I resolved to take the advance copy of the speech to the meeting and follow the words of the humorist to see how correctly he had surmised the feelings of the crowd.

Strange as it may seem, Dr. Burdette did not deviate one single word from the copy of his address, which I had spread out before me. Wherever the word "applause" occurred there the audience applauded. Wherever he had "laughter" the audience laughed.

It was not an address he had ever delivered before. He had written it that morning and yet he followed it with a fidelity that was positively marvelous. It was an insight into the brilliant mind of the humorist that should be recorded when his biography is written. All the world loved Bob Burdette and he loved all the world.

The Holy Land fired his imagination as no other bit of country ever had and his pen seemed dipped in poetry, beauty and reverence. His letters to his father who had always been an ardent Bible student, were filled with beautiful detailed description and with reference to Bible passages by book and chapter and verse illustrating the scenes we were visiting. His memory was saturated with the Scriptures and there was rarely a topic he approached, no matter what was its nature, that he did not draw upon Scripture for text, topic or illustration.

Years before, using this same familiarity with and memory of the Scriptures, he wrote an article concerning "Ingersoll's Creed":

ROBERT J. BURDETTE—HIS MESSAGE

With this title some one sends us a little tract, containing epigrammatic expressions from Col. Robert G. Ingersoll's latest lecture, "What must we do to be saved?" We have read the tract and we have read the entire lecture. If this is truly Ingersoll's creed, the colonel isn't so far out of the way. He is coming around, maybe. He manages to get considerable scripture into his creed, as he sets it forth. There is lots of hope, in fact there is a great deal of certainty for the colonel. We subjoin a few articles of this great man's creed, just to show from what book he got his declaration of faith.

"Honest industry is as good as pious idleness," says the Colonel. Well, that's all right. That's orthodox. The Bible says the same thing and said it long before the colonel thought of it.

"Faith without works is dead."

"Christ believed the temple of God to be the heart of man."—Ingersoll.

Yes, that's orthodox, too. We "must worship him in the spirit". "Know ye not that ye are the temple of the Holy Ghost?"

"If I go to heaven I want to take my reason with me."—Ingersoll.

Of course, and so you will, "for now we see through a glass darkly; but there face to face; now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known."—I Corinthians, xiii, 12.

"Fear is a dagger with which hypocrisy assassinates the soul."—Ingersoll.

That is good gospel, and "perfect love casteth out fear".

"If I owe Smith ten dollars, and God forgives me, that doesn't pay Smith."—Ingersoll.

Correct you are; the prayer of Christianity is "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors". "Owe no man anything."

"Reason is the light of the soul, and if you haven't the right to follow it, what have you the right to follow?"—Ingersoll.

"Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding, be men."—I Corinthians, xiv, 19, 20.

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"If you go to hell, it will be for not practicing the virtues which the Sermon on the Mount proclaims."—Ingersoll.

That's all orthodox. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

"The men who saw the miracles all died long ago. I wasn't acquainted with any of 'em."—Ingersoll.

Same way with the men who saw Servetus burned. But the colonel most firmly believes that Servetus was burned.

"A little miracle now, right here—just a little one—would do more toward the advancement of Christianity than all the preaching of the last thirty years."—Ingersoll.

"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."—Luke xvii, 31.

"If there is a God in the universe he will not damn an honest man."—Ingersoll.

"A false balance is an abomination unto the Lord; but a just weight is his delight."—Proverbs, xi, 1.

"There is only one true worship, and that is the practice of justice."—Ingersoll.

"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's and unto God the things which be God's."—Luke xx, 25.

"God will not damn a good citizen, a good father, or a good friend."—Ingersoll.

Certainly not; nor any good man. "A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth; he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely, he shall not be moved for ever; the righteous shall be held in everlasting remembrance."—Psalms cxii, 5, 6.

"Study the religion of the body in preference to the religion of the soul. A healthy body will give a healthy mind, and a healthy mind will destroy superstition."—Ingersoll.

That explains why the Indians have no superstitions.

"People who have the smallest souls, make the most fuss about saving them."—Ingersoll.

Of course, Colonel, they are the hardest kind to save.

"I will never ask God to treat me any fairer than I treat my fellow men."—Ingersoll.

Well, that's perfectly orthodox. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." "For with what judgment

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ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you.”

“Upon the shadowy shore of death, the sea of trouble casts no wave.”—Ingersoll.

The colonel must have been singing that good old hymn “When I can read my title clear,” in which occur the lines:

“And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast.”

In a response to a request for his favorite Bible text he wrote:

What is my favorite Text?

When the day is raw and stormy, I want a cloak, warm and storm-proof, and I snuggle into it and draw it around me like a “garment of praise”. When the day is bitter cold, the sunny side of a great rock, with the outlook to the south is my favorite, and “the Rock that is higher than I” is my shelter. When the way of the pilgrimage is dusty and hot, I love a shaded path close beside the windings of the river; I love to hear the murmur of “the fountain of living waters”. When I am hungry, a little passing shower of manna pleases me as well as any thing, with the promise of “the hidden manna” in the day of overcoming.

When I am filled—“the full soul loatheth the honey comb”, and a little exercise, such as climbing the Hill Difficulty or running with Patience a hard sprint in the race that is set before me is good for me. When I am tired, I long for an arbor of rest—I want to “lie down in green pastures”, until my soul is restored. Going down the dangerous slopes I want a pilgrim’s staff upon which to lean.

When there are giants in the way, I want a sword—“a right Jerusalem blade”, and some One to “teach my fingers to fight”. Sometimes I am faint hearted and frightened, then I want a trumpet blast that will stiffen the sinews of my soul, like the trumpets of Gideon. Then another day I have fallen among thieves, I am sore hurt, and I need words that are healing balm. One time I need to be coaxed; the next day I have to be commanded. Today I must be restrained and feel the pull of the rein and the grip of the curb. Tomorrow I must have whip and spur. On my stupid days I must be patiently enlightened—

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"line upon line, precept upon precept". On other days when I know too much, I must be cautioned and reproved. My favorite text? Oh, my children, you might as well ask me which is my favorite eye. Whichever one I might happen to lose, of course.

He always found a text in everything and these suggestions he noted down to use at some future time. For example, standing in a Japanese temple one day, he wrote:

Buddha's doctrine of "The Path"—our own Indian expression "The Jesus Road". That is simple and plain—it is Jesus' own teaching, "I am the Way".

Frequently these suggestive notes were not written but he sketched with pen and ink illustrations of thought which in a few strokes visualized what it would have taken paragraphs to have written.

One of his assumed privileges was the coining of words, which led him to say:

I once coined a name way back in 1876, for one of my so-called humorous characters—Bilderback. I put the Bilderback family in jocose print for several years. One night, about 1887, I lectured in Salem, N. J., and told one of my Bilderback stories. The audience was convulsed with more mirth than the story called for. After the lecture I was introduced to about a dozen Bilderbacks, who enjoyed my story more than any one else.

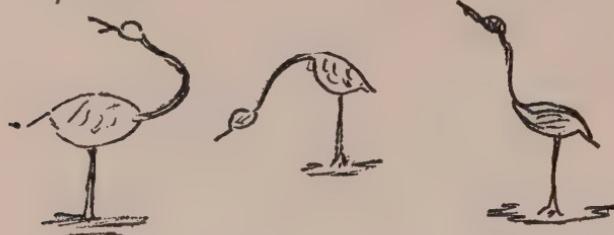
He had a peculiar intimate way, in his early writing, of addressing advice to "My boy" or "My son" which attracted and gripped the interest of the young readers.

Remember, son, [he wrote] that the world is older than you are by several years; that for thousands of years it had been so full of smarter and better young men than yourself that their feet stuck out of the dormer windows; that when they died the old globe went whirling on, and not one man in ten millions went to the funeral.

Don't be too sorry for your father because he knows so

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Yokohama Nurseries.
Plant fantasies.



Rose tent



"Bell" windows

火 味 杓 案



Red
Yellow
Purple
Green
white.

Brocade
hangings
and terra cotta,
shades of green
emerald & Nile

VIVID IMPRESSIONS OF JAPAN

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much less than you do. Remember the reply of Dr. Wayland to the student of Brown University who said it was an easy enough thing to make proverbs such as Solomon wrote. "Make a few," tersely replied the old man.

The world has great need of young men, but no greater than the young men have for it. Your clothes fit you better than your father's fit him; they cost more money, and they are more stylish; your mustache is neater; the cut of your hair is better. But, young man, the old gentleman gets the biggest salary, and his homely, scrambling signature on the business end of a check will drain more money out of the bank in five minutes than you could get out with a ream of paper and a copper-plate signature in six months.

Again:

Remember, my boy, the good things in the world are always the cheapest. Spring water costs less than corn whiskey; a box of cigars will buy two or three Bibles; a gallon of old brandy costs more than a barrel of flour; a "full hand" at poker often costs more in twenty minutes than a church subscription amounts to in three years; a state election costs more than a revival of religion.

You can sleep in church every Sunday morning for nothing, if you're mean enough to deadbeat your lodging that way, but a nap in a Pullman car costs you \$2.00 every time; 50 cents for the circus, and a penny for the little ones to put in the missionary box; \$1.00 for the theater, and a pair of old trousers, frayed at the end, baggy at the knees and utterly bursted as to the dome, for the Michigan sufferers.

The dancing lady who tries to wear the skirt of her dress under her arm and the waist around her knees, and kicks her slippers clear over the orchestra chair every night gets \$600 a week, and the city missionary gets \$500 a year, the horse-race scoops \$2000 the first day, and the church fair lasts a week, works twenty-five or thirty of the best women in America nearly to death and comes out \$40 in debt.

And again:

Remember, my son, you have to work. Whether you handle a pick or pen, a wheelbarrow or a set of books, digging

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ditches or editing a paper, ringing an auction bell or writing funny things, you must work. If you look around you, you will see the men who are most able to live the rest of their lives without work are the men who work the hardest. Don't be afraid of killing yourself with overwork. It is beyond your power to do that on the sunny side of 30. Men die sometimes, but it is because they quit work at 6 P. M., and don't get home until 2 A. M. It is the interval that kills you, my son. The work gives you an appetite for your meals; it lends solidity to your slumbers; it gives you a perfect and grateful appreciation of a holiday.

There are young men who do not work, but the world is not proud of them. It does not even know their names. It simply speaks of them as "so-and-so's boys". Nobody likes them. The great busy world does not know that they are there. So find out what you want to be and do, and take off your coat and do it. The busier you are, the less harm you will be apt to get into, the sweeter will be your sleep, the brighter and happier your holidays, and the better satisfied will all the world be with you.

These illustrate also that his humor lay almost wholly in his forms of expression and in an unexpected collocation of ideas, the effect of which upon the reader or hearer was cumulative. But through it all, he maintained that "humor is but the garment of truth. It is the combination of philosophy and truth which makes humor. True humor delights women—buffoonery shocks them. Men laugh at situations—women at sentiments."

"What's that, Dr. Burdette?" asked a young man in his church study one day, pointing to a colored lithograph of a washerwoman, framed and hung on the wall.

"That, my boy, is an illustration that the popular heart is on the right side," he said, with a smile. "Some years ago, John A. Johnson was running for governor of Minnesota, and

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some one threw it up to him that his mother had been a wash-woman. He admitted that she was, and that he had helped her, when he was a boy. So they made this cartoon, and called it the governor of Minnesota, and the man was elected by an overwhelming majority, on the Democratic ticket, in a Republican state."

"And what's that?"

That, my son, is the old story, 'For he's a jolly good fellow'. The young wife is sitting up waiting for him; the clock points to 2 in the morning; she has brought out his slippers and dressing gown, and has fallen asleep beside the evening lamp, her head resting on the table. That, my son, is the strongest, briefest sermon on the drink problem preached in many a day! It is so awfully true that it is almost humorous in its ghastly reality; for, as I told you, true humor is but a foil to give to truth its true proportions."

He was often urged by his literary intimates to write more for permanent literature. Melville Delancy Lawson (Eli Perkins) wrote years ago:

Before you go away, Bob, before you are translated to Moses and Elijah you ought to collect all the best things you ever wrote into one or more volumes and leave it to the boys and girls growing up.

The reason he did not do this may possibly be found in a reply he once made to Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain). We visited them once when they were living outside of London, and as our two boys and their two daughters played tennis, Mrs. Clemens and I chatted, and Mr. Clemens and Mr. Burdette went off into another room for a visit.

Finally Mr. Clemens said, "Bob, do you know what a — fool you have been all your life". "Yes, Mark, I reckon I do. No one but the dear Lord knows that better than I do. But in what particular respect do you mean, Mark?" Mr. Clemens replied, "You have

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gone around the world all these years just lecturing to folks who forget you tomorrow. Why haven't you written books and charged 'em two dollars and a half apiece for them?" "Well, I'll tell you, Mark," said Mr. Burdette, "I suppose its because I care more for folks than I do for the two dollars and a half".

In that you have the key-note of his life.

While he did not preserve his writings in book form to any extent, he did the marvelous and unusual thing of preserving his writings in a dozen scrapbooks of clippings from the Burlington *Hawkeye*, Brooklyn *Eagle*, Los Angeles *Times*, and his diaries were religiously kept from the beginning of his lecture career up to two weeks before he died, in which are found detailed accounts of every phase of the activities which crowded his life. These records are greatly enriched by sketch and illustration with his pen, and comments that run through the full gamut of his emotions, his gifts and his characteristic outlook on life.

Nothing was ever too great for him to undertake for a friend, and yet it was in little ways, little thoughtfulnesses, inexpensive gifts, the helpfulness that only required thought, a moment of time and the loving spirit, by which he endeared himself to the hosts of people who felt he was their special friend. When in Europe for a few weeks vacation he occupied his spare moments in writing souvenir postal cards to members of his family and of his church. He delighted 500 people therewith one year, dipping his pen in love as he wrote. Later he said, "The only reason I did not write 500 more is because I did not stay away long enough". He passed his sixty-third birthday while away on this trip, and solemnly declared, "It shall never occur again".

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In a desk basket was always a department where he kept envelopes addressed to some special friends. From time to time he slipped into these envelopes a poem, a church calendar, a clipping, and finally a few lines of personal greeting. One who knew of this habit could realize how constantly he kept his friends in mind and how enthroned they were in his heart. As a result of these little acts there grew up many warm friendships. A copy of a letter he wrote many years ago came back to him because it was so characteristic of his great heart:

IOWA FALLS, IOWA.

To the Postmaster: I mail a pkg to-night addressed to "the Two Little Misses Elliot" which is all the address I know for them. They are the two little girls who sat on camp stools in the front of my audience tonight. Their mother is a widow I understand. And I know you will oblige me by forwarding the parcel to the children.

Sincerely yours,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

and "the Two Little Misses Elliot" were on his mailing list through all the years and became treasured friends.

His friendships were not confined to those of his own creed or political party. No one could have been more solicitous during Mr. Burdette's illness than was Bishop Conaty of the Catholic Church, and the President of the Los Angeles Federation of Catholic Societies, who wrote:

In common with all who know you, or have heard of you, whether members of your own congregation or not, or even of our good old Celtic Club, I have watched with anxiety the reports of your illness and cannot refrain from expressing my sympathy and sincere hopes for your speedy restoration to health. Los Angeles can ill afford to lose the services of such

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an able champion of all good causes and of Truth as he sees it. God have you in his keeping and hasten your convalescence is the prayer of

Your sincere friend,

A. E. LYNCH.

His love for humanity crowned it all, with a distinction he made between “liking” and “loving”.

I cannot like some men; their boorish ways;
Their coarse vulgarities; their love of show;
Their purse-proud vanities; the shame of their self-praise;
Their crying faults. But this full well I know—
I do not need to “Like” the things that show outside,
But I can “Love” the soul for which Christ died.

Gregarious as his nature seemed to be, there were times when for very weariness of spirit he sought solitude in a peculiar manner, and once he wrote of it:

Do you know, I love to run away from the town, and get away from the people, the noisy, chattering, talking people, although I love them, and stroll about in the cemetery? I like to get away from the live men and seek the companionship of the dead ones. I believe I love the dead people. It is good to stroll about among the tombstones and look down upon the graves of them that sleep. You seem to catch some of the sweet quiet of their dreamless repose, and as you read their names and think of them all this grim, nameless fear of death passes away.

One day away out in Blissfield, Michigan, I left the little town dozing away in the early March afternoon and strolled out to the acre where the sleepers await the resurrection dawn. I glanced at the stones as I passed along the little mounds and wondered that people should live so long, for most of them seemed to have dropped to sleep in good old age far down the quiet afternoon of life, like an old man falling asleep in his arm chair watching the fading sunlight die away and the creeping shadows falling over his meadows and brown stubble fields. How tenderly you feel toward the dead you have never known before as you stand among them.

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And if trouble of any kind ever shadowed his heart, he waited until night and the stars came out and he walked out or lay near a window where he could see them, saying:

The stars! God's own stars. Whenever I am troubled and perplexed—when my heart aches and my faith is dim or blind, I love to go out and look up at the stars. God's beautiful stars. And if they are all there, calm, majestic, serene, each in their place where God's finger put them a million years ago, I say to my bewildered brain, or my troubled soul, "Be content. He can take care of your little affairs." And the stars say to any storm that may be raging in the narrow, shallow sea of my little life, "Peace, be still," and there comes a calm—the Wonderful Stars!

What contrasts life holds! In 1863, writing of "Camp near Yazoo Pass", Miss., to his sister, he wrote:

I am sending \$10.00. Would send more but I will need money around where we are going in case of sickness—wounds, or any other misfortunes of war. It is awful hot, though the woods are quite green. I found two violets in the marsh which I intended sending to you, but they got themselves lost.

March 8, 1901, from Mount Carmel in Palestine, he wrote:

The happy camping tour in Palestine is ended. . . . We spent two days at "Sweet Galilee" and took a little ship and sailed and rowed to Capernaum; walked by the Sea made forever sacred by the presence of Jesus; visited this part and that; and as we climbed the long hill above Tiberias, cast many longing looks back to the most beautiful lake on earth. . . . This has been to me more than all the rest of the year's journeying. It has not merely been a journey through wonderful places, but a beautiful ride—nearly 200 miles through wild flowers. One day at luncheon, between Nain and Galilee, I walked away from the table about one hundred yards and

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came back with thirteen varieties of wild-flowers. This land is no desert.

Because of the generosity of Mr. Burdette's nature, he was the recipient of more and varied requests for assistance than it would seem possible could be directed to any one man. These he responded to through the long years of public service, whenever and however possible. And he had the gratification of receiving an unexpected amount of appreciation. Possibly he prized most of all the words of heartfelt gratitude for some act or word of his which had been given unsolicited. Some of the appreciative words from James Whitcomb Riley have already been quoted, and many more might be added. Dr. James Hedley, a well-known lecturer, writing to him, recognized with appreciation this kindly spirit toward a compatriot:

It has been in my heart for some time to write you a letter of earnest thanks for the many gracious and kindly things you have said of me and my work. Hither and yon, good people tell me of it. Bless your big wide heart, always open and warm as a June day. It has room in it for every creature. Your words and your life are twins and that is the highest expression of the character and work of a good man. I always enjoy following you because you leave a taste sweet as honey, in the mouths of all men.

A man employed in the mechanical department of the Burlington *Hawkeye*, when Mr. Burdette first went to the paper, treasured in his memory this appreciation expressed three years after Mr. Burdette passed on:

Mr. Burdette's writing in the paper, and his personality, was the greatest factor in the building up of the *Hawkeye*. In Dickens "Great Expectations" there is this paragraph: "And now the very breath of the beans and the clover whispered to my heart that the day must come when it would be

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well for my memory that others walking in the sunlight might be softened as they thought of me." And I know of nothing that will better express the feeling and sentiment of every man that was associated with him on the *Hawkeye* than that their "hearts are softened" as they think of him.

Strickland Gillilan, one of the Press Humorists, in a letter to Mr. Burdette, expresses the tenderness with which he was held in the hearts of the younger generations. This is especially interesting because it is not only the writer's tribute but the appreciation of the Press Humorists of America:

MY DEAR BOY:

There—there, now. Don't think I'm flippant or fresh. I'm not. To me, and to the other boys who play about your knees in the fragrant field of humor and the finer things (but are there any finer things than pure humor?) you will never be aught except that bigger boy who has been further afield than we. He has been along the path of perennial boyhood further than we now think we may ever dare to go. He has found where the hornets have built their nests, but he doesn't tell us. With one of his own twinkling eyes carefully cocked on the hornet's gray nest he shows us, away over yonder, where the grass is softest; where the road is smoothest; where the clover-blooms along the pathway are reddest and fullest of that which tempts the bees.

And we miss the hornets—wondering why, but loving the good big boy who showed us where the pleasures were. Our big boy friend has found where the deepest and coolest and sandiest-bottomed swimming-holes are, and where it is safe to dive from a sycamore limb; he also knows where the bad boy put the thorns of honey-locust in the slide. He knows that just after we climb some of the highest hills there is the finest view and the best stretches of good going. That is why he smiles as he sees us tagging along over those places—and we smile because he does; which makes the hard climbs easier for us.

The big boy is just now standing on the top of a ridge that looks to us like the summit of all things. To him it doesn't

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seem so. But he is smiling. As he smiles he holds out his strong, helpful hand and says: "Come on, boys, come on. This isn't the top you think you're seeking, and I can't even see it from here. But I've found out something as I came along, and it's so good I can't wait till you get up to me to tell it to you. I've found out that what we think we're striving for isn't it at all. It's something infinitely better, infinitely more lasting—I can see that from here, but so can you from where each of you is—by looking up".

He knows where all the orchards are that let some of their apples hang over the roadside fence—and he knows which orchard owners keep dogs. He knows the place where he slipped once and pretty nearly fell, perhaps, and when he comes to that place he tells the boys a tender story that makes them laugh and cry both at once so that they follow him around the slippery spot without knowing they have been led. He knows all these things, and the boys love him for knowing them, and are happier and more hopeful as they say to one another: "See, he has been along the road further than we and he seems even happier than when he started. It is a good road and the trip has paid him. He has found more of sunshine than of cloud in it. He has found more of gentle warmth than of withering cold in it; he has found more of beauty than of ugliness in it; and the simple, artless joys of childhood that we find so sweet and have feared might wear out and pall upon us, are still sweet to him. It is a goodly journey—for is not our Big Brother evidence of it?'

And we are all happier—much happier because you have lived; all the happier because, as you have perhaps forgotten I told you in your own beautiful home, you have not played the Merry Andrew but have reserved in your own heart and soul the right to be serious; because you have admitted that the rose was inevitably accompanied by the thorn, but have ever insisted that the sweetness of the rose far outweighed the sharpness of the thorn. That's why we love our Big Brother and that's why our lives are so much brighter and our work so much easier from the fact that he has lived.

So many young men might have duplicated this appreciation. From a young newspaper man:

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Beloved pastor and esteemed friend, I see from the news dispatches that your face is turned toward the setting sun, and I want to express again, as I have tried to from time to time in the years past, my heartfelt appreciation to you of the chance which you first gave me, almost ten years ago, when I was making the hard and seemingly unsuccessful struggle for recognition. I feel now, as I have always felt since you in your kindness and love first gave me my opportunity, that the measure of success I have attained has been due entirely to your friendship and aid at the critical point in my life. God make happy and sunny the days that bring you closer to the great river.

And this from a man of accomplishment:

The whirligig of time brings many surprises and I know that you have not reached the time when surprises are no longer unexpected but I am sure that you will wonder how I can possibly associate you with such a work. Do you remember (and of course you cannot, such is the multitude of letters you receive) having acknowledged a letter of appreciation and sympathy written in the summer of 1886 from an island in Puget Sound, by a boy who was clearing a Government claim and preparing himself for an eastern technical school? Your letter in reply to this boy's note is as follows:

MY DEAR BOY:

Many thanks for your note. A word of encouragement heard in the dark, the grasp of the hand of a fellow pilgrim whose face we have never seen, comes like a benediction to every man. This wonderful fellowship makes us all stronger.

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, for the sake of the young men whose lives you influence by daily contact; and lean hard upon the arm of "Him that is able to keep you from falling". In Him alone we find the strength and patience we all need.

Sincerely your friend,

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

I well remember the day your letter came, and as I look at it now, a mysterious emanation from the sheet brings back

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the surroundings under which it was first read. The log cabin in a clearing, a candle on a hewn table, and by it a blue-shirted boy of 17 eagerly studying Ganot's physics, Ray's algebra and Otto's French grammar. Home made weather instruments were exposed and studied, and the self-imposed lesson of the day tacked to the fir log for contemplation while sawing. From that day, twenty-six years ago, to this, your letter has been an inspiration to me, and my studies in climatology have been continued ever since then, influenced by the friendly hand held out at the critical period of my life.

From those whom he did not know personally, there came messages like this:

You don't know me at all, but I thank God I know you very well. In fact, I have been your friend for several years. I have heard you lecture, have frequently heard you preach, have read your books and newspaper clippings. These have been a comfort and a joy to me more than words can tell. You have done me good all these years.

Walt Mason, a man known to all newspaper readers today, wrote to me personally in 1911:

I hope your husband's health is better than it was a while ago. I can't tell you how much affection I have for him, although I have never seen him. He was the idol of my boyhood. I had a pretty hard time of it then, working in a woolen mill in a dreary Scotch village in Canada, and my happiest hours were spent when the weekly paper came. It always contained some funny stories from the Burlington *Hawkeye*, and I used to read them and double up with glee, and set the house afire, and scalp the cat. It seems to me that the besetting sin of most American humorists is a fondness for caustic sarcasm. A humorist, above all other men, should be full of the milk of human kindness. I am glad that Bob went into the ministry, and I hope he says funny things in church. I can see no reason why religion should be the funereal thing so many preachers make it. Give my love to him.

And more recently, a man who years ago was encouraged by Mr. Burdette to believe that there was

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something better for him than the life of a pugilist, wrote to me of the success of his publication, and that his publishers had asked for another book, saying, he knew how Dr. Burdette would rejoice in it were he here, and he added, "God worked in the snow when he made Robert J. Burdette—he was a white man!"

Very touching was the appreciation, the devotion and affection of General Harrison Gray Otis, owner and editor of the Los Angeles *Times*, a man often misjudged as to his motives and, because of his brusque and austere manners, believed to be unappreciative and unsympathetic. General Otis once wrote:

DEAR MR. BURDETTE:—You are a lovely friend, and you swing a lovely pen, especially when you are writing to an old friend. To be very candid with you—more candid than I ever was before in my life—I am very fond of you, and I am a profound admirer of your genius, your ability and your capacity for doing things. I appreciate the little letter which you were good enough to write me with your own hand; I appreciate it beyond expression. I express my very sincere gratification over the good opinion of the *Times*, and the conduct of the *Times*, expressed by you, who are so good a judge. I sometimes think, when mentally reviewing the past (which I haven't time to do very often), that I have been abused a "leettle" too much—but maybe not. It is the sore and serious misapprehension under which so many minds labor that is annoying and maddening. Misjudgment is the habit of so many people. These things do not hurt, save when they take on the form of an attempted impeachment of my good motives, my integrity, and my character for patriotism as a citizen, independence as an editor, and loyalty as a man.

I know you understand me, and I bless you for it.

The great battle in which we have been engaged for so long a time, and out of which we are emerging triumphant, was a battle provocative in the fullest degree of antagonisms—bitter industrial, political, sectarian, and even personal antagonisms—and for this reason the conflict has been fierce, intense and implacable.

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My great aspiration is to see the country industrially free; to see liberty under law prevail everywhere; to see peace and progress in the industries, hope and prosperity among the wage earners, loyalty to the nation instead of to the labor lodge, abundance of well-remunerated employment for the devotion to duty on his part; comfort, contentment and happiness in his home. So may we, could all these things be achieved, attain a measure of dignity and power of citizenship the like of which the world has never yet seen. Then what a country America would be! It is the misapprehension of these motives of mine on the part of so many men—good men—not confined to trades union circles by any means—that makes me feel the injustice and makes my task so much the harder.

But while God gives me life, I will go on with my work and perform my self-imposed task as best I can. I will stand by the flag, swear by it, and if need be die for it.

But all this is more or less “shop” talk, when I am really not in the mood to talk shop, but am choke full of sentiment, as you have sometimes suspected, and that sentiment has been freshly aroused by your beautiful letter.

Believe me, dear Mr. Burdette,

Very truly and affectionately your friend,

HARRISON GRAY OTIS.

And after the dynamiting of the *Times* Building, Mr. Burdette received this expression:

It does not become a manly man, a brave man, or a Christian to boast that his life is at any time entirely outside of the danger zone; nevertheless, I almost believe that, in my own case, the dynamite bomb has not been manufactured which is destined to end my life. More than one bomb may be intended for that purpose, but destination is a word of different meaning in this conjunction. So that I do not think it is irreverent or impious in me to hold to the belief here indicated. I shall, in any event, endeavor to adhere to my motto, “The battle goes on.”

Thanking you profoundly for your good will, your friendship and blessed prayers in my behalf, I remain,

Gratefully, your friend,

HARRISON GRAY OTIS.

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The friend was justified who once wrote of him:

He lays the rough roads of purest nature even
And opens in each heart a little heaven.

As one re-reads his letters to friends, there is so much of vivid personality in them, so much of friendliness and caring, you feel as if the mail had just come in bearing these messages. This is strikingly true of letters to the immediate family. With infinite pains, he wrote them long letters during the lecture season concerning his engagements. And this was done in face of the fact that his engagements were usually six a week in six different towns or cities, with railroad travel between. One letter to his sister Molly consisted of—

Just a breathless minute between minutes to send a Monday morning kiss which isn't so frosty as it is sudden.

To his sister, whose son Fred was about to be married, he wrote from Vienna:

Old age is coming to me with multiplied blessings as our boys and girls bring new nieces and nephews into the widening circle. Well, love grows with its own life—the more we have to love, the more we love each other. And there is a big place and a warm one in my heart already for Fred's wife. She is the best girl on earth and I can prove it by Fred himself.

The tender solicitude toward his loved ones so apparent in his early years, which indexed his character and endeared him to his world of readers, was repeated to my mother, when in advancing years she became an invalid. He wrote her frequently entertaining letters that greatly cheered her on her way:

DEAR MUNNIE:—We are happy as ever, and just as busy as ever. Busier, I sometimes think. Clara has no time at all at home; her desk is overflowing with business demands. I am not quite so overwhelmed because a great deal of my corre-

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spondence can wait until after I am dead, before being answered. Last Sunday I preached in Temple Church twice. But Dr. Eversole says that was the last time, and that I must not preach but once a Sunday after that. And I obey him. I find that I am more apt to be obedient to my guardians than I used to be. Like all people who are growing old, I am

A little more tired at close of day;
A little less anxious to have my way;
A little less ready to scold and blame;
A little more care for another's name;
A broader view and a saner mind;
A little more love for all mankind;
A little more charity in my views;
A little less thirst for the daily news;
A little more leisure to sit and dream;
A little more real the things unseen—
And so I am faring a-down the way
That leads to the gates of the better day.

Monday night I went in to Los Angeles, a guest at a banquet given to John, Cardinal Farley, by the Newman Club, the Roman Catholic club of Los Angeles. I believe I was the only protestant clergyman invited. Great banquet; lot of speeches; good things to eat.

Tuesday was our day at home, as usual, and we remained in Sunnycrest to receive our guests. Wednesday we went in to Los Angeles early, for that is our regular weekly day in the city. The last time before this that I was in a cyclone, was on the night of the Fourth of July, 1876, in Burlington, Iowa, when I had the entire roof of my house blown into the Mississippi river, a mile away, all my windows smashed and my stable demolished. But this day in town, trying to keep up with Clara, was something like it, only there wasn't so much property destroyed. But we went to bed at 8 o'clock that night and got up at 8 o'clock the next morning, still tired and sleepy. Your daughter is a dear, good, sweet girl, but she is mighty hard to follow over the hurdles.

Saturday I made a speech at the dinner of the Board of Trade in Pasadena, and "made 'em holler". Violet had a

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couple of committee meetings, and I think a meeting of the hospital board. Friday I addressed the students of Occidental College, and in the afternoon we went into the city. Saturday, as you see by the enclosed programme, we went to the "Ground Breaking for the Southwest Museum" and Clara made the star speech of the occasion, and with Miss Fremont and General Chaffee, Bishop Conaty and other dignitaries, shoveled the dirt that begins the excavation for the foundation of the building. This morning Roy came out home and we went to the Presbyterian church and then brought Roy home to dinner.

In the afternoon we went over to the Stoughtons, took Mr. and Mrs. Stoughton in the car and all went into Los Angeles, to the Columbia Hospital to see Helen and the baby—little "Clara Bradley Wheeler". That is the little lady's name, chosen by that blessed Helen. It is a name most appropriate as well as pretty. That was Roy's mother's name; it was Clara's name when I first met her, and it is pleasant to have it reappear in the third generation. Baby and mother are getting along splendidly. Little Clara is the sweetest, prettiest little baby I ever saw. I have a great deal more share and credit in her than I am entitled to. Helen says nobody calls it her baby; the other day two persons came to the hospital and asked permission to see "Doctor Burdette's granddaughter". Everything comes to him who hath.

Roy is a great big husky fellow weighing 170 pounds, and as handsome as he is big, as smart and capable as he is handsome, and as good as he is all three put together.

So runs the world away. This week will be as busy as the last. I don't wish we had any fewer friends, but it would be pleasant if they made fewer demands upon us. All this catalogue of our doings does not include Clara's committees and boards, nor any of her social functions. But we all keep well under all the pressure, and hope for easier days to come.

This he signed, "Your affectionate grandson", and then he added the postscript:

See there, now! We're all crazy over being grandparents. I can't think that anything but a grandson is worth while. And how do you feel since you became a great-grandmother.

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Among the latest letters to his relatives was one to his sister Jo:

Things are moving about as usual out here. Clara is buoyantly well, and busy, for she has her hands full of a sick old husband, but she is the sweetest, tenderest, patientest nurse on earth, and would make sickness a blessing if an arch-angel could do that. I don't seem to be getting better very fast. There has been some talk by the doctors of taking me apart to see what makes me act that way. I have the sublimest confidence in the ability of the Medicine Men to take me to pieces. But I am a little doubtful of their skill in putting me together again. They sit in consultation on me Saturday morning, after which I will know more about myself than I do now, or less.

Rob has changed papers, leaving the *Deseret News* and going on another afternoon paper, the *Telegram*. I am a little sorry for it, because the *News* is a rich paper, and has the reputation of never discharging a faithful employe but keeping him on to pension age—something rather unusual in the newspaper business. However, Robin is on the ground and understands his own business better than I can at this distance. He is getting too far along in years, however, to do much more changing around. It keeps a man at the foot of the payroll and the bottom of the promotion list all the time.

Roy, my son, always had the place of a real son in his heart, and there was genuine comradery between them. In Boston, he wrote him in 1911:

MY DEAR BOY: Yesterday I went out to the National Park and saw New York wallop Boston in fine style up to the fateful ninth inning, 5-3, when, on the second half, nobody on the sacks, two balls and three strikes and nobody out, Ames, p. for N. Y., suddenly lost control of his steering gear and the Beaneaters clouted out 3 runs and the Giants stampeded for the dressing room. It was a great game of good ball and the only fly in my cake was not having my boy alongside to help me take the highest vocal hurdles. Muvver, strangely and coldly indifferent to this best Boston culture and refined art

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would not go to the game, but I took her to "The Pops" at night.

Say, I heard our old friend, William Henry Tell, by an orchestra of 55 pieces. Did they tear it off? They made a paper snow storm of it. "Hoffman's Love Tales" for an encore.

I am feeling jolly well and good. Lots of love from both of us. Carry our greeting to Helen of Pasadena should you chance to see her to-morrow, whilk bein' The Sawbbath day ye will nae doot hae a crack i the kirk yard.

Affectionately, DADDY.

The friendship between them was very close and tender and he seemed to have been the last person "Daddy" recognized before his final sleep. A week before he passed, when he revived from the state of coma for a brief moment, he looked up into Roy's face and whispered softly, "Oh, Roy, Oh, my Boy," with a tenderness of meaning that life nor death can ever obliterate from precious memory.

It is impossible for me to reveal to the reading public the many expressions of affection, devotion and reverence which his letters contained before and after marriage, or to recite the various ingenious ways in which he daily delighted himself and me by surprised suggestions of his hourly thought of our life together. In a letter just before our marriage, written from Wisconsin, where our early friendship began, he wrote:

Appleton, with its sweet old memories, dear, dear sweet friend, for you and I were only friends then, true and warm hearted friends, happy in the morning land, joyous in the loves that reigned in our hearts; love so perfect in its happiness that it gladly made place by its side for new friendships. How little did we dream that the coming years would make that love something as holy and sacred as religion and ripen that friendship into love. Again we met, and again one summer afternoon at Winona Lake—your baby was in your arms; the mother beauty on your face and the mother love in your

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beautiful eyes. You have forgotten, because to your heart it seemed a little thing, but I never have—how gentle and sweet you were to my motherless little boy who came to your tent with me. How different is all the world of today from what we then dreamed it would be. Good-night my dear sweet friend of yesterday—my sweetheart of today. God keep you safe through all the night, and God bless with all tenderness and all grace of purity and sweetness the love that knits together our thoughts and lives.

Again, his poetical imaginative nature is revealed in a letter from Eau Claire, where we first met in a pulpit where he was to preach one Sunday night, and I was asked to read the hymns. He used to tell of this instance, saying he did not exactly see the need “of a lady to read hymns before I should preach, but when I heard the first lines read, I was thrilled with the most musical voice I had ever heard, and the memory of it never left me”. So in 1898 he wrote from there:

A thousand sweet and tender memories sweep over my soul as the train waits here this winter morning. I look down at the many-spired little city, the bridges lacing the river with their open frames, the browns of the dead oak leaves filling in like shadows on the white snow—the long sluices with great icicles pendant from them—the stretching acres of lumber piles on the river bank. Oh, my sweet dear friend, in those old days when friendship blossomed in an hour to ripen into the sun-kissed fruitage of love, ardent, pure, tender, after many years, as you read this your thoughts are my own thoughts. I wonder, Violet dear, if my mind so often going back to our first meeting, unconsciously ran farther back than that, for there is so wrought into my thought of you this half-waking, half-dreaming impression that you I knew when you were a little girl. For you know, I have always had that half feeling of a boy's acquaintance with you, but not of playmates, exactly; I have never lost the sense of the difference between our ages, so in those days I was a very big boy of 21 to the little 10 year old girl, quite a young man indeed, I was. But I was very fond of you, do you remember, and I loved your merry, light-hearted romps.

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ing ways and your quiet loving ways, and your child caress. Very tenderly all these things came into my thought as the train waited at Eau Claire, a little while ago, and the City passed slowly out of the range of my vision, as though I had awakened from a sweet dream of Eau Claire and Clara B. Wheeler. For the young professor came into the picture too. Rightly did you say to me, "You can never be jealous of him, Rob." Never, for the least shadowy fleeting moment. Alway and often and lovingly as you will, you may talk of him, and like one thought our hearts will pay tender homage to the memory of a pure, noble life, that went out with the morning tide.

It has begun to snow again and the white flakes sweep through the trees and over the farms like a winter mist. Everywhere in this enchanted Eau Claire land, the snow. The low graceful slope of the hills lie before me like your dear life—pure, gentle, beautiful. The sweet white snow! How it beautifies everything it touches. City street and fallow field, thatched cottage and towered mansion—it gives the same touch of beauty to all of them. So God's loving mercy covers the yesterdays where raged and stormed and fought the fiery passions, and vaunting temptations, and fierce appetites of men, with all their pride and hopes, and ambitions. God be merciful to them. God pity my Yesterdays and hold all my To-morrows in loving and wise and mighty hands for me. My To-morrows! Beautiful, and sweet, and good and pure they will be, for you will be in them. God keep you safe!

During the long years of our correspondence many were the single verses and poems written incisted in the hearts of letters, but perhaps it would not be amiss to give to the public one which came shortly before our marriage:

CLARA

When I shall see My Lady face to face—
Dear face—as calm and gracious as the dawn;
When with glad eyes in sweet content I trace
The beauty that my love-lit dreams have drawn—
My Lady's face!

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When I can look into My Lady's eyes,
Starlit and tender with love-radiant gleams;
And see in them—more deep than summer skies—
The Look of Looks that blessed my waking dreams—
My Lady's eyes!

When I will hold My Lady's hands in mine—
Fair hands, that gently hold my captive heart—
When 'round them both mine own shall closely twine
In such a clasp that time nor fate can part—
My Lady's hands!

What can I do, when at her feet I kneel?
My eager lips, thrilled with impetuous speech,
Will dumbly falter, as the heart will feel
More than earth's loudest eloquence can teach!
My Lady—Mine.

Your lover,

ROBERT.

Once he wrote:

We are two noon-day lovers. Maybe that is the reason why there has been so much sunshine in it all dear. The shadows are shortest at noon-tide you know, and softest and tenderest and sweetest in the afternoon. God grant it shall be so.

That it was granted so, he recorded in his Diary when we were in Venice some years later.

This afternoon we rowed out on the Giudecca and watched the sunset by moonlight—a beautiful effect, and rowed home through the picturesque Italian shipping in the darkening twilight—just we two—gray-haired lover and brown-haired sweetheart.

Many were the incidents of the years, the memory of which bring back the smile. One day a letter came, containing a check addressed to him, but intended for me. I found it on my desk with this notation on the

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envelope in red ink, "Opened by mistake by your needy, impecunious but admiring husband", and inside this parody:

And be these juggling business-fiends no more believed
That palter with us in a double sense;
That write the word of promise on the envelope's address,
And break it in the check.

MIKE BETH.

While attending a National Convention of Women's Clubs with me, he hung a card on the outside of our door: "Madam the President is out but the Office Cat is in, come right in," and afterward he said to a reporter:

Yes, Mrs. Burdette was with the California delegation and I was errand boy. I kept the door-knob polished, took in the regrets of those who could not come, received the guests and performed various other duties. I had a good time and I never had that at any of the men's conventions I ever attended.

From that Convention, I went with him to the National Republican Convention at Philadelphia, "just to show," as he said, "what real team work is". So, often we spoke from the same platform at his insistence, especially before schools, because, he urged:

No finer illustration can be given the young people in this age of domestic differences that it is possible for husband and wife to be vitally interested in life and devotedly interested in each other at the same time.

He took great joy in surprising me by some little gift—a verse written out and pinned on my pillow, a little book laid at my plate and "in all the little ways that love creates". When away from home he wrote to my dressmaker:

I want to surprise Mrs. Burdette with such an Easter present as no one but you can design for her. I want a white

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gown—she is lovelier than a dream in white—in some soft looking stuff. I think it is “Nun’s veiling” or something of that sort. I want it beautifully plain—exquisitely simple—something she can wear about the house just for *me*—and yet it must do for a simple evening at home for friends who “just drip in”—nothing formal, you know. She has plenty of elaborate—ornate—dinner and reception gowns. I know you will understand what I want. And Madame My Lady must know nothing about it until she opens the box.

And when it arrived he took a hurried moment in which to write:

MY gown came in ample time—and it is lovely as a violet. And “She” looked lovelier in it than a June morning. And wasn’t My Lady delighted! AND SURPRISED!! And didn’t I get a BIG ONE!!! What a joy it must be to you just to create such a vision of loveliness.

He seemed never to read a book or a magazine without having me in mind, making marginal notes and interlining comments for me to see later. When reading “John Percyfield”, he underlined this sentence: “To believe in excellence is to be an aristocrat,” and wrote in pencil (You dear): “To believe in it for *all* people is to be a democrat,” and followed it with the penciled “me”, showing he felt himself to possess the true spirit of democracy, desiring the utmost measure of individual good for all.

To one of his sons he wrote:

We are all just as busy as ever. The past week has been a cyclone. I have spent most of it trying to follow Muvver over the jumps and across the ploughed fields, and if I ain’t knee sprung with sprained pasterns and wind galls, I must be a mountain goat.

But there came a time when it was not so difficult for us to walk side by side, for he wrote to my son from Honolulu:

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Dear Little Mama doesn't rally from the lassitude so well as I would like. She wearies easily tho she looks well as she always does. This morning in the little pink house gown and the daintiest pink bow at her baby-throat and the carnation pinks in her cheeks, she was a Pasadena rose-bud to make her husband fall in love with her over again, every time he looks at her.

The recovery of speed is referred to later in a letter from Japan to his sister Jo.

About four mornings in the week, I have a newspaper letter of from 1200 to 1500 words to write, and the rest of the time I am trying to keep up with my little wife. And I could do it easy enough if I could trade my boots for a pair of wings.

When I had gone to the sea coast once for a little rest, he sent me this solicitous note:

I hope you go to bed early and get up late and have breakfast in bed. Do get a little rest dear. This life of ours is killing home life, social life, and reflective life, and giving us only strain and stress—the wear of nerves—and the waste of brain and heart. Let's cut out a lot of it. I am beginning to think we have had about honors enough, when we sit down and count the cost of them.

In June of 1914, we were separated two weeks and a half at his earnest solicitation. I went for a little rest to a convention, and his letters, which were to be his last to me, were written with all the ardor and tenderness and endearment of a youthful lover. The heart of him never grew too old for intense loving, though the physical weakened under illness and the years. From one of these letters I quote:

The enthusiasm of this last letter of yours is contagious, and Oh I am glad, glad, so glad you are "there". So glad I almost forced you to go; so glad I have that much portion in your happiness and benefit. I just love to think of you in the heart of the Federation, in the life of those splendid women

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who made the Federation what it is, for it is goddess-born. You will write a sketch of its birth sometime and embalm the names of the immortals who were its sponsors.

I went out to Ardmore [my son's home] and had a cheery visit of an hour and a half. Roy got up early last Sunday morning in order to take care of his little daughter all day. ALL DAY. All Day, Yes. That's what I said—ALL DAY. Blossom said he worked like a little man. Your granddaughter, greatly encouraged by this unexpected reinforcement to the nursing force, exerted herself to her utmost. She hung out the banner—"We aim to please," and invented new games and athletic plays every minute. When 11 o'clock came at last and the nurse led her away to "Numa" and beddie, Roy fell fainting on the couch in the library and turned to Blossom saying faintly—"Good Lord! Does she keep that up all day and every day?"

Wasn't that delicious?

She was in the same humor yesterday. She showed me her latest accomplishment. She stood before me, and gravely gathered up her little skirt, and BOWED! Then she said "Butterfly" without any qualifying phrase.

And this, the last letter entrusted to the mails:

Sunday, June 20th, 1914.

This is the home day and you are just a little bit closer to me than ever, for it is our day. I dream of you, think of you, long for you, and thank the dear Heavenly Father for every memory of you. So dear, so sweet, so helpful you had been and you are to me. The day is tender with its thoughts of you. The waking hours that sometimes come to make the night long, no longer come with dread and with tossings, for you come with them, making them gentle with caresses; with memories of tenderness; with whispers of courage and hope with words of love; with all that you have been and are. A host of angels come with your face—Love, Hope, Promise, Joy. The sun is slowly sinking to the hills that look down at Sunny-crest, and I have just been watching it from the windows of your little room above the western porch, dreaming that you are standing beside me.

SOME INTIMATE PHASES

Good-night then, my precious wife. Bend down over me for a little minute while your kiss and your caressing arms whisper your Benediction on my lips and my heart. God bless and keep you.

And this was the written benediction he left on my life. The spoken benediction, when after a most tender and appreciative blessing for our lives together, he added:

And I thank God for the gift of you to me. When you are left alone—when you have rested—when you have had a change—you will lay aside the ashes of mourning from your heart and go on with your life of work—making it better than it has ever been—lifting up the fallen, helping those who need you, and inaugurating great movements as you have always done. I shall watch you doing it and rejoice that we did some of the probationary work together. And God will give you grace and comfort you.

CHAPTER XIV

A LAST TRIBUTE

THREE score years and ten was the calendar measure of his life, but unto the third and fourth generations is bequeathed the vivid spirit which always emanated from his hopefulness, his cheer and his optimism. Struggle and poverty, pathos and sorrow and grief there was in his life, but he builded on these his faith, his trust, his unswerving belief in a Heavenly Father's abounding love which overflowed through him for all humanity. His imagination and the spiritual promises hid in his heart had pictured for him over and over again his entrance upon the joys of heaven, which to him was such an actuality that he often spoke of it as one might talk familiarly of a journey and the arrival at its destination. And yet, we do not know, and possibly he did not know when the spirit winged its flight. Lingering unconscious for days, the physical act of breathing ceased as a watch ceases to tick. His spirit was always such a joyous one that the grief over our immeasurable loss was intermingled with a peculiar sense of happiness for him that his spirit had been freed, and all he had believed, had prayed for and tenaciously held to was now his to enjoy.

Expressions of appreciation and sorrow were nation wide. A composite might be made of them, and the outstanding lines would read: "Simple," "Heartful," "Human," "Loving," "Kind," but each one carries a delicate shading of the analysis of these same human elements. So I quote a few at random:

A LAST TRIBUTE

The life and daily walk of Dr. Burdette was a perfect flower of his doctrine and philosophy. No one will ever know how many thousands of bitter and discouraged souls drank in new sweetness and hope therefrom. Not until the final accounting can there be any just estimate placed upon his work. He lived and worked and laughed, and the world grew better and happier and will remain better and happier because of him.

He wrote much for publication that could not be catalogued as humorous, but through it all there was a genial, direct, human approach, mingling the grave, the shrewd, the idealistic, with the laughter often close to tears, which gave his writings a wide audience and a powerful appeal.

Having just turned three score years and ten when summoned to the realm of eternal joy, he was humorist extraordinary and cheer-giver plenipotentiary for two generations.

There was always something about him suggestive of the fountain of eternal youth.

It was given to him to feel deeply and to plumb the depths of human hearts.

His ability to find something good in everything, his determination to always make the worst appear better, was a strong asset.

Two things there be for which men are better. Laughter and Tears. Between them runs the gamut of human emotions, and upon this harp of a thousand strings Dr. Burdette played with the hand of a master, and all the music spoke of better things, kindlier deeds and larger hopes.

His mission was to lighten the burdens of others, to preach the gospel of good cheer, and by his pen, on the platform and in the pulpit, right nobly has he acquitted himself in the years of his ministration. What cobwebs of the brain he has helped to brush away! What mental loads he has rendered it easier to bear! To how many of us he has given a fresh grip when the bottom of everything appeared to be slipping fast! Yes, he has mellowed a lot, and so many of us. He has shown us how

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to live kindlier, how to think in broader terms, to write with less of the cankerous desire to wound. To quote the closing lines of his last book, "For love is sweeter than life, and stronger than death and larger than hate."

Strickland Gillilan, one of the American Press Humorists, of which Mr. Burdette was perpetual "Pastor Emeritus", wrote, "He was like a tender father to every one of us. Speaking of Burdette to Riley last fall, I said, 'When Bob Burdette says, 'God bless you!' he means it, and Riley replied, 'So does God when Bob says it.'"

One of the last things from his pen was "Life's Melody and Sweetness" from his loved home of "Sunnycrest", entitled "Alpha and Omega", a poem in prose of the road of life from the cradle to the grave, closing with this epigram: "And so, as one in the gathering darkness retraces his steps by a half-remembered path, much in the same way as he had come into this world, he went out of it."

He held to the end the same good cheer and the same smiling outlook on life, and the same kindness that forebore in the days of his unphilosophic youth to make a jest at the cost of other men. He brought into the years more and more the pathos of life, more of the rich intent of the Creator who gave him the mystic gift of his divine humor, that earnestness should mingle with our smiles and wisdom temper our mirth.

An appreciation of Mr. Burdette, written by John S. McGroarty, author of "The Mission Play", is as follows:

Some will say good-night to him,
And some will say farewell,
Hearts will ache and eyes be dim
With grief too deep to tell.
But some will say good-morrow—
They who long before him trod
The valleys dark with sorrow,
To the happy hills of God.

A LAST TRIBUTE

He wrought no tears until today,
 No grief the heart to goad—
He who was glad upon the way,
 Who sang upon the road.
Content to stay, to go as sweet,
 His story has been told;
He fares at last, afar, to greet
 The merry men of old.

Beyond the throb of earth's desires,
 The foolish things and wise,
He seeks tonight the roadside fires
 That gleam in Paradise.
And, be his pathway short or long,
 And comes he soon or late,
The merry men of God will throng
 To meet him at the gate.

Other words of appreciation were:

Robert J. Burdette has ceased to borrow time on this side of the shoreless river, and on some sphere of nightless glory has builded his altar for eternity.

He loved all things lovable in nature and humanity. He loved good books; the masterpieces of art and architecture and music were his companions. Soldier, patriot, author, orator, wit, friend, dear old Bob, farewell. No, not farewell, but good-night. We will see you in the morning.

God rest his gentle soul, and lend
 His spirit with us to the end.

An oft-quoted response to a letter of sympathy might be my added expression to these excerpts from others:

Through all the years of my husband's life he has been building a wonderful memory to himself by enfolding the world in love and now these return such an outpouring of love and tribute as rarely comes to one man. His going home was

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gentle, joyous, beautiful, as had been his life—and I walk alone with my beautiful memories.

As he once wrote:

Yesterday's joys are pleasant, to me and to you. Yesterday's sorrows are sacred. The years make them divine.

So calmly did he think of the days that would follow his passing, that while he was yet quite strong, he made a memorandum which he told me I would find in his desk, in suggesting arrangements for the services that would follow his passing. In this he said:

One of my favorite hymns, one which Violet and I have often sung together, is Oliver Wendell Holmes' "Lord of All Being Throned Afar". Always we sang it to Louvain. If they should sing this over my casket, I think I could hear her dear voice, dearest, tenderest, sweetest music in this world. One other hymn, which is written on my heart, a hymn of the Blessed Bernard of Clairvaux, "Jesus, the very Thought of Thee". This we so often sang together to Claxton. These are not "funeral" hymns, but my life was not timed to funeral marches. Why should my death be sadder than my life?

This request was carried out at the services held in the Pasadena Presbyterian church, of which he had once been pastor. While the flags of the cities of Pasadena and Los Angeles were at half mast, these hymns were sung by a quartet of loyal friends, whose voices he had loved in the years of his pastorate.

It seemed fitting indeed that his own funeral service should have had in every word spoken, in each line of the Scripture read, in every tender pulsing song, the message of faith, the conviction of eternal life and its gladness. There was also an appreciation expressed that the doors of the Auditorium in this case were opened to every one, embodying the generous ideal of the democracy and the catholicity that Dr. Burdette ever expressed in his countless friendships and broad activities.

A LAST TRIBUTE

Dr. Robert Freeman, Dr. Robert R. Meredith and Dr. James Whitcomb Brougher, voiced the tributes of the English speaking world, as well as neighbors and immediate friends. Dr. Freeman dwelt upon what to him epitomized Mr. Burdette's life, when he said:

He was kind. Other men shall tell the stories of the war, for they too followed the drums of the Forty-seventh, they too heard the sharp commands and followed the lead of Sherman and Tuttle and Mower, they too faced the testing at the brook, suffered from want and wounds and weary hearts and longed for home and mother's love; but every one who tells of those brave days and sad days shall link the name of their little fellow soldier with some cheering words and some tender deed that showed him to be kind. Others shall try to tell of his lectures in the old days and to make us hear anew the jingle of the jester's bells, and laugh anew with the wandering purveyor of sunshine; but I shall see in every line he wrote more than his sensitive appreciation of the beautiful, more than his versatile knowledge of men and of things, more than an unusual fusion of talents, more than cleverness, more than happiness, a soul overflowing with kindness.

O, we shall remember the good times we had with him in great groups and in small. His commonest words were songs in many keys, sweeter than instruments of ours e'er caught. We shall remember his sermons when with simple art he stirred our souls to press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, when this man whom all the world did love revealed to us the passion of his life to follow Christ and serve Christ and tell the story of his Christ until it won upon the hearts of men. But most of all we shall remember that kindness watered the roots of his life, and was the stream that made possible the delight of men in the green pastures and blooming flowers and refreshing fruit of his ministry. His jokes were never gibes, his humor was ever pointed with generous intent, and all the children of his mind were rocked in the cradle of his loving heart.

Oh, for the subtle touch of his art!

O, for the gift of his pen!

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O, for his smile just once in a while!
O, for his ways among men!
O, for the gentle charm of his speech!
O, for the powers of his mind!
But mostly I pray, on this deep-shadowed day,
O, for his grace to be Kind!

Tender and beautiful were the expressions given by Dr. Robert R. Meredith, himself one of the grand old men of the American pulpit, and one whose power had not declined with the ripening wisdom of his advanced years. As he stood in the pulpit where Mr. Burdette himself had stood, the sunlight came streaming through the cathedral windows, illuminating his distinguished features, and his hair that was white like snow. Beginning in a clear yet low voice, as one who draws his audience into confidence, then step by step, his beautiful eulogy was pronounced, his rich and vibrant voice registering in deeper tones, ringing with sweet clarity:

He in whose honor we are gathered this afternoon is absent. The beloved father and husband, the faithful and generous friend, the wise and brave citizen, Robert J. Burdette, has passed beyond our reach. He was given a quiet hour in which to die at his beautiful home, Sunncrest, and with those whom he loved best on earth surrounding him. I am impressed with the humanness of Dr. Burdette's life. He lived just a plain everyday human life, with its ups and downs and its joys and sorrows. The great secret of his power was his brotherly love and his belief in God. His religious faith was not mere inheritance. It was his own and it fitted him exactly.

In his simple appraisement he gave expression to the current thought of all the world that knew Mr. Burdette. He said just what the world was waiting to hear said. He caught the heart-throbs of a number of sorrowing people and put them into speech.

ROBERT JONES BURDETTE
JULY 30 1844 - NOV. 13, 1814

THE PILGRIM THEY LAID IN A LARGE
UPPER CHAMBER WHOSE WINDOW OPENED
TOWARDS THE RISING. THE NAME OF THE
CHAMBER WAS LOC. WHERE HE SLEPT TILL
BREAK OF DAY AND THEN HE AWOKE AND SANG.



THE FINAL WORD

A LAST TRIBUTE

The offerings of flowers and the service were simple, as Mr. Burdette would have wished, and at his oft-spoken desire, I outwardly expressed the fact that I was set aside to walk alone by the wearing of white mourning. In this his expression was that it was life, not death, which he would ever keep before the world.

We carried him to Rosedale, where reverently about the open grave there stood a great gathering of those who had known and loved him. Among them were Protestants and Catholics, Jews and Gentiles, all recognized representatives, who came to testify to the catholicism of Mr. Burdette's brotherhood and faith in life and the eternal verities. He must have visioned this when he wrote:

Such a sweet, beautiful place for one to sleep! O child of God, the graves of all who fall asleep are made in gardens of loveliness. Birds of eternal hope and blossoms of faith fringe every sleeping-place, and the gentle earth lies lightly on the ashes that we love. Every cemetery in Christendom is a garden. Today, in climes more rigorous than ours, men smile with tender joy to see that the grass is green in the sun-gleams that caress the little mounds where loved ones lie asleep, and the children find the delicate anemones like stars shining down in the graveyard grasses. In every home there is a pictured face on the wall that brings the longing ache into the heart. But the dear absent one sleeps in a garden, and everything in the garden, grasses and buds and dainty wild flowers, stately lily and queenly rose, majestic palm and oak and pine—everything in the garden sings, and sings, and sings of life—life—life—and ever more life! Not of decay and death.

We laid him in Rosedale, in fulfillment of his written request:

I desire to rest close beside her whose love and patience and fidelity has pillow'd my aching heart so many times when the way of the pilgrimage was tear-swept, my Violet-wife.

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It will be enough if the stone which shall mark the place where nothing lies should bear no mark but my name, but if anything be written thereon, this I selected for myself when I was a boy of 14, indeed it was on my 14th birthday that I formally chose it from the favorite book of my life time, the "Pilgrim's Progress"—"It is written of the night, Christian slept in the house beautiful."

And there the stone has been placed which bears his name and the inscription:

"The Pilgrim they laid in a large upper chamber, whose window opened towards the sunrising; the name of the chamber was Peace, where he slept till break of day, and then he awoke and sang."

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